GOLF: David Davies at Turnberry on the 115th Open Championship

The shark shows his teeth

GREG NORMAN won the Open Championship at Turnberry on Sunday taking, at last, the major title his talent has long deserved. On four previous occasions, in championships around the world, including the US Masters and the US Open this year, he has threatened and fallen back.

Now, the Great White Shark showed that he is more than just a dorsal fin, winning by a margin of five shots from Gordon Brand Snr and by six from Ian Woosnam and Bernhard Langer.

It was the biggest winning margin since Royal Birkdale, 1976, the year Severiano Ballesteros announced himself by finishing second to Johnny Miller, albeit by six shots.

In the process Norman silenced, thankfully, the sometimes strident doubters, not least the New Yorkers who, only five weeks ago at Shinnecock Hills, openly accused him of choking. Norman grabbed one by the shirt collar in order to refute the point; on Sunday he took Turnberry by the throat with a closing round of 69 and was, at the end, the only man to equal par with his score of 280.

Over a Turnberry that at last relented and presented calm and sunny conditions, the golfers were able to play a recognisable game again but no-one, neither Nakajima nor Woosnam, Faldo nor Graham, could put any pressure on the man who, overnight, led by one shot. That was the extent of his lead in the Masters and the Open at the same stage, but this time Norman truly had learned. He told himself to treat it like an ordinary tournament, just like any of the dozens he has won around the world; and, but for a lapse at the 17th, he succeeded. He managed, as Tony Jacklin so perceptively remarked "to keep his mind in the present" and not to allow it to wander ahead to the fulfilment of ambition.

That he played without anyone applying immediate pressure or that the only real pacemaker was Ballesteros who posted a comfortable clubhouse mark of eight over, should not detract from the merits of Norman's win. He started the event as one of the favourites; he played the entire championship in or around the lead and the whole of the last round knowing that, if he lost again, the critics would be seen to be increasingly justified.

Not that he thought about Shinnecock. "All I want to say about that," he said, "is that it is a pleasure to play in front of people who want you to win." He confessed that he woke up nervous and that he could not eat a full breakfast. His wife, Laura, kept asking him how he was, and Norman said: "I told her I was fine. I couldn't tell her I was nervous as hell."

But that, he thought, was good. At Shinnecock he had woken feeling flat and could not get himself excited for the final round. This time he nursed his nerves, with some inspired help from his caddy, Pete Bender. He it was, after Norman had hit an awful duck hook at the seventh, who spotted that his boss was beginning to get a little quick.

That did the trick. Norman got his par from a dreadful place in the rough and then hit a good drive and an even better four iron second to the eighth. From that moment Norman felt in control. "I said to myself 'well, guys, I'm playing too good for you this time'," and so it proved.

As if recognising that the fates were with him, Norman began to attack the flag with his second shots. At the 12th he flew a six-iron into the heart of the green, and at the 13th an eight-iron carried straight on to the top tier. Then at the 14th, from a drive in the rough, he hit a seven-iron which actually hit the pin from 198 yards out. It settled three feet away, and when Norman holed it, his lead was extended to six with only four holes to play. "I was hitting the ball so well that even I was impressed with some of the shots," he said later.

A two-iron tee-shot saw him safely on the green at the 15th, and a one-iron at the 16th off the tee was followed by a magnificently played three-iron from a place that the spectators had trampled flat. Norman deliberately cut the ball into the green, totally ignoring Wilson's Burn which lies in wait for the slightest mis-hit.

At the 17th another drive escaped into the rough, and he had to use a sand wedge to get out. But then he crashed a six-iron only four feet from the hole, at which point he suffered something of a crisis. He said to his caddy: "My mind has gone dead. I can't even see the hole. You tell me what the line is and how hard to hit it." But Bender miscalculated somewhere, for Norman ran the ball three feet past and had to hole that for his par.

By now it was all over. "I knew the championship was mine," said Norman; and all he had to survive was the traditional rushing crowd down the 18th. "You've got to experience that to believe it," said Norman. "Trying to win your first major championship is like having a monkey on your back. But, now it's off. I'd like to try and win 10 or 15 or even 20 of them before I finish."

There were only two Americans, Gary Koch and Fuzzy Zoeller, in the top 10, a remarkable change since 1977 when there was only one European, Tommy Horton, in the top 12.

Final scores and winnings

(GB and Irish unless stated)

280 — G. Norman (Aust) 74, 63, 74, 69 (£70,000). 285 — G. Brand Snr 71, 68, 75, 71 (£50,000). 286 — B. Langer (W Ger) 72, 70, 76, 68; I. Woosnam 70, 74, 70, 72 (£35,000 each). 287 — N. Faldo 71, 70, 76, 70 (£25,000). 288 — S. Ballesteros (Sp) 76, 75, 73, 64; G. Koch (US) 73, 72, 72, 71 (£22,000 each). 289 — F. Zoeller (US) 75, 73, 72, 69; G. Marchbank 78, 70, 72, 69; T. Nakajima (Jap) 74, 67, 71, 77 (£17,333 each). 290 — C. O'Connor Jnr 75, 71, 75, 69; D. Graham (Aust) 75, 73, 70, 72; J. M. Canizares (Sp) 76, 68, 73, 73. 291 — C. Strange (US) 79, 69, 74, 69; A. Bean (US) 74, 73, 73, 71. 292 — A Forsbrand (Swe) 71, 73, 77, 71; J. M. Olazabal (Sp) 78, 69, 72, 73; R. Floyd (US) 78, 67, 73, 74. 293 — B. Charles (NZ) 76, 72, 73, 72; M. Pinero (Sp) 78, 71, 70, 74. 294 — D. Cooper 72, 79, 72, 71; R. Rafferty 75, 74, 75, 70; V. Somers (Aust) 73, 75, 73, 73; P. Parkin 78, 70, 72, 74; R. Lee 71, 75, 75, 73; D. Edwards (US) 77, 72, 72, 73; B. Crenshaw (US) 77, 73, 70, 74; V. Fernandez (Arg) 78, 70, 71, 75; S. Torrance 78, 69, 71, 76. 295 — M. Kuramoto (Jap) 77, 73, 73, 72; J. Mahaffey (US) 75, 73, 75, 72; I. Stanley (Aust) 72, 74, 78, 71; S. Lyle 78, 73, 70; D. A. Weibring (US) 75, 70, 76, 74. 296 — R. Commans (US) 72, 77, 73, 74; T. Watson (US) 77, 71, 77, 71; A. Brooks 72, 73, 77, 74; R. Chapman 74, 74, 78, 73; M. James 75, 73, 73, 75; G. Player (SA) 75, 72, 73, 76; P. Stewart (US) 76, 69, 75, 76; G. Turner (NZ) 73, 71, 75, 77. 297 — M. O'Meara (US) 80, 69, 74, 74; R. Maltbie (US) 78, 71, 76, 72; Ho Ming Chung (Tai) 77, 74, 69, 77.

Shell-shocked England salvage a win

ENGLISH cricket internationally continues to look shell-shocked. Last week they were fortunate to share with the New Zealanders the two one-day series preceding the full Test programme. They did so after losing the first match at Leeds and hanging lead weights round their ankles in the opening stage of the second at Manchester.

In the event, the English batsmen salvaged some respectability and won the second, but the lack of sustained talent and challenge through much of the nation's team sports has given substance to the current national debate about the waning significance of team sports in schools.

New Zealand won the first of the one-day matches by 47 runs and even though they had set only a fair target of 217 for eight in their 55 overs. But a succession of indifferent strokes and three ridiculous run-outs from England were no way to respond to keen bowling and fielding from the tourists. New Zealand's total owed much to the tail, for with the ball seaming in the morning they were at one stage 54 for four, then 112 for five, Jeff Crowe finishing on 66. Lamb, one of the English run-outs, with 33 was the best of the reply of 170 in 48.2 overs.

If the English were disappointing at Leeds, it was nothing compared to the reception the teams received when they left the field two days later at Manchester having allowed New Zealand to reach 284 for five in 55 overs. The crowd jeered an English team that had, with all their experience of the limited over game, allowed New Zealand to score 123 off the last nine overs. Dilley's final four overs cost 38 runs; Pringle's four were hammered for 45; and Foster conceded 20 runs in one over. Martin Crowe enjoyed himself hugely with 93 not out, followed by Rutherford's 63. Happily for England and the 30,000 crowd, it all came right in the end, the jeers turning to cheers as Athey, 142, carried his bat to lead England to 286 for four with eight balls to spare, having shared an opening partnership of 193 with Gooch, 91. Athey played splendidly and hit three boundaries off the last over by Bracewell to bring victory just as England teetered, with Gower, Lamb, and Gatting going cheaply in the late chase for runs.

Any hopes of Athey becoming England's new opener with Gooch in the first full Test this week against the New Zealanders ended when the selectors decided again to drop Lamb and to recall Moxon, who had become the first Yorkshireman to hit two centuries in a match against the tourists in their last county match before the one-day series. England also dropped their latest wicketkeeper, Richards, and restored French. There have now been 25 players chosen so far this season for the national squad.

In the county championship, Graeme Hick became the first batsman to complete 1,000 runs in the season during his unbeaten 219 for Worcestershire against Glamorgan at Neath. And to think

Alan Dunn's DIARY

that in earlier eras there used to be competition to be the first to reach that mark during the month of May. The new pattern of play, with limited over knock-out competitions taking up the early part of the season, is largely to blame for the change. Worcestershire beat Glamorgan by seven wickets to join the group chasing Gloucestershire at the top of the table. Given some good weather for the rest of the summer it could be a tight finish, for only 64 points cover the top team down to Lancashire at eleventh place. Gloucestershire beat Sussex by one wicket in a close thing at Bristol, where they squeezed through at 94 for nine. They are on 164 points, 23 ahead of Nottinghamshire who beat Yorkshire by an innings and eight runs after Broad, Johnson, and Robinson had all scored centuries in their first innings of 404 for three declared.

Essex, who are in third place, will be without their Australian Allan Border, from the middle of August. He is going home and will not be returning to complete his two-year contract next season. He says that he is playing too much cricket and seeing too little of home and family.

Britain's lawn tennis Davis Cup squad were summarily dismissed by Australia in the quarter finals at Wimbledon at the weekend 4-1 and were clearly seen in world terms to be living beyond their means. Although they remain in the top group for another year, their already slender resources in men's tennis will be halved with the retirement of the No 1, John Lloyd, who missed this match, and the doubles specialist, Colin Dowdeswell. Britain blooded Andrew Castle, who almost beat Mats Wilander in the Wimbledon championships, but he was one of the two defeats on the opening day that effectively sealed the rubber. He lost and admitted to learning a lot — at the hands of Paul McNamee, 5-7, 1-6, 2-5, while Jeremy Bates went down 4-6, 7-9, 4-6 to Pat Cash. Bates and Dowdeswell then lost the doubles to Cash and John Fitzgerald, 6-1, 6-5, 6-4, before Cash beat Castle 8-6, 6-4, and McNamee lost to Bates 3-6, 6-2, 6-4, on the final day.

Greg Lemond became the first American to wear the race leader's yellow jersey at the start of this week's assault of the Alps in the Tour de France cycle race. A former world road champion, he has been a challenger for the Tour in recent years, but like the rest of the field, he seemed to have dropped from the reckoning last week when the favourite to win his sixth title, Bernard Hinault, won the first mountain stage and gained a lead of five minutes overall. On the next day Lemond cut that lead to 40 seconds by winning the stage and at the weekend went into a two minutes lead over Switzerland's Urs Zimmermann, with Hinault third.

In motor cycle grand prix racing, another American, Eddie Lawson, dominated the French Grand Prix at Le Castellet at the weekend to gain his fifth win of the season.

British soccer lost one of its world leaders last week with the death of Sir Stanley Rous, aged 91. He was taken ill during the recent World Cup tournament in Mexico, and had to be flown home, missing the final stages. A former referee (he was in charge of the 1934 Wembley FA Cup final) he became an administrator with the Football Association, becoming secretary, and later was president of the world body, FIFA, for 12 years.

BOXING: John Rodda reports from Wembley

Bruno is left in the wasteland

FRANK BRUNO was like an intrepid explorer trekking the icy waste; the wind began to bite and suddenly he slipped into a crevasse, dragging down with him the paraphernalia of the operation which had launched him and raised the hopes of thousands.

The way in which Tim Witherspoon, the World Boxing Association champion, had suddenly turned their heavyweight fight at Wembley stadium in the early hours of Sunday morning — reducing Bruno to a crumpled heap, his face distorted and swollen — had magnified all the doubts about the British hope's fighting skills.

Round by round the rigidity and stiffness of Bruno's boxing contrasted with the swinging street-corner style of the man from Philadelphia. Was it really a world title fight we were watching, or even, if you want to be technical, just a one-third slice?

But for moments during the first seven rounds it looked as though the open-mouthed, heavy-breathing Witherspoon, lumbering clumsily as he threw his swinging rights which often merely cut through the air, would be exhausted by his own efforts. But then the neatness which Bruno had remembered to bring with him from Canning Town, proved to be no more than drawing board material.

After a nicely-paced six rounds for Witherspoon, with the punching volume rising on both sides, the fight took its ultimate course from round seven. Witherspoon left his stool with a blue swelling under the left eye; and that seemed to unshackle Bruno. He produced two solid lefts to the head and opened up, but it was costly; Witherspoon hit back with some of his best punches, and began to move more easily.

He took that round, and the eighth — a messy one in which Witherspoon wasted some energy on missed shots. He was blowing, but he still landed some crunching blows to frustrate those who were looking for technical finesse and tidy boxing.

In the tenth round the American's left hooks began to change the shape of Bruno's right cheek. It was not yet a desperate situation, but through his slovenly untidiness those smooth Witherspoon arms and shoulders were producing some fluid, easy boxing movements which had never been a part of Bruno's challenge.

In the eleventh, a left to the head drove Bruno back into a neutral corner, lifting his hands to paw away the danger. He slid across the ropes into Witherspoon's corner, and slowly went down under a flailing barrage of punches which continued long after he was unable to defend himself. The indignity of the ending, the inability to cope with scrambled senses and legs and arms which would not work to order left a feeling that this was more than just a defeat. It may have put Bruno out of the ring for a very long time. And the white towel which his manager, Terry Lawless, tossed across the ring in a most un-English boxing action — seemed to indicate a lack of confidence somewhere.

A first cursory examination which indicated that Bruno's jaw was broken proved to be unconfirmed, but the pain of the injury to his pride from which Bruno was suffering kept him locked in his dressing room away from the media.

Witherspoon was magnanimous to a courageous opponent. "I thought he was ahead, then I was ahead. It was a close, hard fight and he should not think about retiring. I said those rippling muscles of his were no good, but I'm sure he can come back again."

• The British Boxing Board of Control were swift to announce at Wembley that they would hold an inquiry into the violence in the crowd at the end of the fight. As the boxers returned to their dressing rooms the crowd on either side of the gangway pressed forward to hold them up, and some fold-up chairs on which spectators were sitting were thrown. Some landed on policemen's heads, and 27 arrests were made.

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THE GUARDIAN WEEKLY

The Washington Post

35p Vol. 135 No. 5 Week ending August 3, 1986

Congress steps up the pressure

SIR GEOFFREY HOWE went into his second meeting with President Botha, on Wednesday, expecting little if anything in the way of concessions from the South African leader and certainly not the "quantom leap" in political reforms which the British Foreign Secretary has been urging.

His mission had been effectively sabotaged on the eve of his first meeting last week by a speech by President Reagan rejecting sanctions and backing Mrs Thatcher. Pretoria was delighted, many Americans were disgusted. The New York Times commented, "It was as if Lincoln had warned the slaves that they were better off than they knew, and that their masters had better be indulged because they had a better grasp of global realities." So hostile was the reaction that the President was said to be getting ready for a U-turn.

Mrs Thatcher meanwhile stood her ground, if anything bolstered by an intemperate outburst from Dr Kaunda, the Zambian President, who abused Sir Geoffrey on his visit to Lusaka, accusing Britain of a "pro-apartheid plot." Dr Kaunda and Mrs Thatcher will both be among guests on Sunday night at a dinner given by the Queen.

The pressure is now on in Congress for new steps, which would include a ban on imports to the United States of South African steel, uranium, cement and aluminium, which are all produced by government-controlled firms; lifting US landing rights to South African Airways; freezing the US bank accounts of government-controlled companies, their employees, and employees of the South African government; and denial of visas to travel to the United States to employees of the government and government-controlled companies. Other proposed new measures include authorising Reagan to sell US gold reserves, a key commodity in the South African economy, and banning new investments in South Africa by US companies that do not adhere to the so-called Sullivan principles on non-discrimination in employment and housing practices.

Limited sanctions against South Africa applied by several countries have already made a serious impact on the nation's economy, slashing exports of coal, the second biggest source of income after gold, and jeopardising the jobs of as many as 40,000 miners. The Chamber of Mines warned last week that if the European Parliament yielded to appeals for sanctions, Far Eastern countries might also stop buying South African coal, causing the collapse altogether of the country's exports. Fearful of that prospect, some mining companies are making contingency plans for massive job cutbacks in the industry.

Industry sources report that embargoes on South African coal imposed this year by Denmark and France and a growing reluctance by other countries to buy coal have cut projected exports for 1986 by 7.5 million metric tons, or 17 per cent. South Africa has also been forced to sell its coal at about 10 per cent below the world price of $25 to $26 a metric ton for the low to medium grades it produces, in a bid to avoid losing more exports. If that happened, the chamber said, up to 40,000 of the country's 110,000 coal miners might lose their jobs. Coal is second only to gold — of which South Africa mines half the world's total production — as a revenue earner. Coal exports last year earned $1·5 billion and production last year was 173 million tons, compared with 57 million in 1971.

The issue of sanctions will be high on the agenda at the Commonwealth mini-summit in London starting this weekend. *Hella Pick writes:*

What Howe needs from Botha is enough to overcome the hump of

Continued on page 6



INSIDE

The political costs of ignoring American values

THE Census Bureau of the United States came up with some interesting figures the other day. The typical white American household, it reported, has a net wealth 12 times that of the typical black American household. It precise terms, 34,135 dollars against 3,397 dollars. Nearly a third of all black householders — three million plus — have no net assets at all, or are in debt.

It is facts like these that lend the issue of South Africa domestic resonance in the USA. American politicians aren't grappling purely with some distance problem of right or wrong. They are also acting on stages far closer to home — with the mid-term elections looming and the nation threatening to slide very soon into deep recession. Mr Ronald Reagan's much-touted speech on sanctions would have had a rough passage at the best of times. This is by no means the best of times. As one picks through the reaction to it on Capitol Hill, a chilling thought for Downing Street arises. The President, sure enough, is Mrs Thatcher's closest ally in this matter. But Mr Reagan's total agreement with (and embarrassing applause for) Britain is not altogether reassuring. He has an alarmed and outraged Congress on his back. He may not be able to call the tune. And where will Mrs Thatcher be then? She has been cast as the burning symbol of opposition to sanctions. That may be very hard to cope with when the symbol stands alone.

The American debate about South Africa has reached a fascinating point. In headline terms Mr Reagan and Mrs Thatcher may agree. But their reasoning, so far as it can be discerned, is rather different. Take one aspect. Mrs Thatcher has not talked much about the threat of Soviet Communism — through its "stooge mouthpiece," the ANC — inheriting Southern Africa. Yet that is a constant refrain of those around Mr Reagan. He attacked the "calculated terror by elements of the ANC" in his speech last week. Some of those who serve him — or have recently done so, like Mr Constantine Menges, former special adviser on security affairs — can be less circumspect. "Many in the Western media are in effect building up the power of the ANC by failing to provide information on its methods, its Communist leadership and its often declared goal of establishing a Marxist-Leninist regime." Such opinions, by those in power in Washington, make it more than likely that this week's stories of intelligence pooling of information against the African National Congress (see page 7) are entirely correct — all covered by the umbrella of anti-Communism. So, within the US administration, there is the familiar tug-of-war between those who see Moscow everywhere and those who try to take one crisis at a time. That, in turn, leads to arguments about what's democratic — in the American concept of freedom — and what can thus be wholeheartedly supported. In such debate, inevitably, there is terrible muddle. Congressional Republicans may now try to strike a sanctions bargain with the Democrats using support for the Nicaraguan Contras as *a quid pro quo*. The equation of the two issues, tells its own story. The State Department (like Sir Geoffrey Howe) would wish to talk to the ANC; but public White House rhetoric seems to rule that out. Mr Ronald Reagan, meanwhile, exercises no true grip on anything. He congratulates (if you please) Mr P. W. Botha on setting up black trades unions, as though that were some unique Nationalist Party triumph, only mildly marred by the current imprisonment of those trades union leaders. He hails the amelioration of a few outward and visible signs of apartheid without ever asking the deep (State of Emergency) question about majority rule — because, of course, he wants somehow to define the majority he wishes to rule.

A prudent observer, surveying the hostile reaction to Mr Reagan's latest address, might this time place a modest bet on his humiliation by Congress. The House has already voted for a comprehensive batch of sanctions *nem con*; the Republican leaders in the Senate will not go that far, but they most probably will now produce a package that far out-distances anything that the President (or the London object of his admiration) will welcome. Of course, the President can use his veto if the opportunity is there. But the head of steam on Capitol Hill may deny him the opportunity — and, anyway, he has often been prepared (on everything but Nicaragua) to lose gracefully if the political cost is too high, as long as his rhetoric doesn't suffer.

That political cost is mounting fast. For a flavour of the mood of the argument, try Mr William H. Gray, budget committee chairman in the House. America and Great Britain are now the "co-guarantors" of apartheid. "Our nation is now firmly aligned with the most oppressive system on earth. It is time to stop thinking about South Africa's minerals and diamonds. It is time to start practising American values." Never underestimate the strength of those "American values" in the eyes of ordinary American voters. Mr Reagan may still be stalwartly bemused at Mrs Thatcher's side, but the rest of the circus is leaving town.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Soviet life behind locked doors

The document of the Movement for Socialist Renewal of the USSR (July 27) may contain "references" available only at top levels of "Soviet officialdom," but the reality of life in the USSR has been clear to many ordinary Soviet workers for years, without any need for such official data, and they have been gaoled for voicing their concerns.

One such Soviet worker, Oleg Vladimirovich Alifanov, portrayed the life of the average citizen of the USSR in full actuality, in a letter to the Soviet Politburo in May 1985. Without any need for "sources," he described the corruption, brutality and injustice of Soviet society, especially to workers, women and those of low status, in graphic detail, and he noted the need for reforms to deal with the problems, many of which appear to be officially sanctioned. For the "crime" of highlighting the appalling living conditions of the bulk of Soviet people he was arrested on July 30 1985 and faces the prospect of 12 years' imprisonment.

In his letter Alifanov wrote "Public life here is a lot like Moscow's stores. There are enough of them, but only one is open, and only partially. The Party does not want to know anything about open doors." It is clear that the vast majority of ordinary people have no opportunity to participate in the "Soviet reform movement," and are imprisoned and persecuted, even today, for making any contribution, however constructive, to the very limited debate.

If the problems of the USSR are acknowledged frankly at the highest levels of Soviet society, as Martin Walker's interpretation of the statement of the Movement for Socialist Renewal would imply, then they must logically accept that they must cease to manage a system that sets out to destroy brave individuals, like Alifanov.

This system based on "hypocrisy, subservience, disrespect for laws and lack of soul" (Alifanov's words) is strongly exemplified by the contrast between the fate of the majority who dare to criticise, who end up sharing Oleg Alifanov's punishment, and the apparent treatment of the Movement for Socialist Renewal.

Basic human rights, including the right to criticise the government, must be restored to all, regardless of status, colour or creed, and not merely given to a handful of CPSU officials.

Robert Chambers,
Secretary General
(British Section),
International Society
for Human Rights,
London SW11.

Misguided thinking behind student loans

As James Lewis points out (The Week in Britain, June 29), Mr Kenneth Baker's argument concerning the replacement of student grants with student loans fails to take into account rising unemployment amongst British graduates, poor pay for some of those who do find jobs, and the potentially detrimental effect of a loan system on the humanities. As British graduates reading for our respective postgraduate degrees in the United States we would like to add a couple more points in support of Mr Lewis.

Mr Baker's contention that loans are readily acceptable in countries such as the USA fails to address two crucial issues. First, it fails to take into account that even if loans *are* "readily acceptable" in other countries this does not mean that the system is unproblematic. Second, there are profound differences between the UK and the USA which render his comparison meaningless. One might imagine a situation, even in the States, where the prospect of loan repayment might easily preclude, and would certainly dissuade, the children of underpriviledged families from continuing into higher education. How much more so would this be true of a loan system in Britain, where attitudes towards higher education, especially, though not uniquely, among the underprivileged, are already so much more negative than they are in America? Mr Baker's comparison overlooks the fact that in Britain aspiration is much more heavily determined and delimited by class position. The ideology of rags to riches and the belief in the ubiquitous potential for financial success pervades American thinking profoundly, whilst in Britain such attitudes are more conspicuous by their absence.

In conclusion, we would like to add that British postgraduate students here are already seeing the results of our present government's policies. More and more frequently we come across other British doctoral students obliged to continue their education in the States because of grant cuts at home; more and more frequently we come across other foreign nationals obliged to choose an American education over a British one due to increased and prohibitive fees in the UK. British education is considered less prestigious, less desireable than it was five years ago, and this trend is increasing.

Mr Baker's new, or renewed, proposal seems to us to exhibit a sad and misguided determination to follow the same short-sighted, and in the long term, utterly destructive educational policies which we have come to expect from the this Conservative government.

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THE GUARDIAN WEEKLY

August 3, 1986 Vol. 135 No. 5

Chernobyl's harvest of caesium

Does anyone out there really know about the pathways of radioactive caesium 134, 136, and 137, but particularly 137 which is most prevalent and has the longest half-life? We do need to know more in order to deal with the post-Chernobyl and possible future situations.

Hay and silage are now being made. Tests are being done by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food on new silage which will enter the food chain next winter. What levels of caesium will be considered acceptable in hay and silage ?

Caesium deposited on young hay and corn by the Chernobyl plume has not been eaten off by sheep or cattle. Working with hay can be a dusty business, and reaping corn can be even dustier. Can caesium particles become airborne; is there any risk from inhalation?

The National Radiological Protection Board proposes a "wash-off" period for vegetation: half the caesium washed off every 14 days. Elsewhere it has been stated that there is no wash-off. Which is true?

Caesium is said to become "locked in the soil." Is it locked equally in all types of soil — clay, sandy, peaty — and if not, how much is drawn back into vegetation? How much is picked up from the soil surface by new growth? If it is locked in the soil is there any risk from airborne particles when harrowing or seeding on a dry day?

These are a few of the questions it would be useful to have answered, especially for the farming and market garden community which is in the front line. If there has been research, the experts have an obligation to tell use what is known and what is scientific assumption.

We have grown up a bit since Chernobyl; it is no longer adequate to hand out kindergarten equations like "two lamb chops once a week for a year equals five days' holiday in Aberdeen."

David Gilbert,
Bishops Demesne,
Ballaugh, Isle of Man.

Why the Commonwealth is still necessary

In his article "The Imperial Guard" (July 27) John Cunningham quotes me (correctly) as saying that I saw the Commonwealth as something of a wasting asset. I would not like it to be thought that I would not deeply regret the demise of the Commonwealth, or that I see it as inevitable.

I felt that in some ways the article was less than fair both to Britain and to our partners. The network of contacts established in so many fields is not just a neo-colonialist effort by Britain to maintain influence on the cheap. It serves as a series of links between fellow professionals and is often more productive than the political set-pieces.

Nor do I think it fair to present the ministerial meetings as simply ego-trips for the overseas participants. That is surely to adopt the patronising tone of which Britain is accused in the article.

When there is no longer any effective forum for the North-South dialogue, it is important to preserve one body which, for all its imperfections, does provide an opportunity for exchanges between Britain and the Third World, and to prevent us becoming simply a Eurocentred power obsessed with our own problems.

But if the Commonwealth is to survive, it must do so on the basis of reality and a clearer perception of mutual interests. Our partners must recognise the limits on the power and influence that we can exercise as a middle-rank state in economic decline.

It is not helpful for a British Prime Minister to appear to be totally impervious to the strongly held views of a majority of the Commonwealth, but nor is it for them to issue threats and ultimatums whenever a crisis occurs.

The transformation by peaceful means of a worldwide Empire into a voluntary association of nations has been one of the greatest achievement of statemanship of our century. It would be a tragedy if it was now to be negated by lack of vision and an unwillingness to seek honest compromises.

The problem of South Africa can only be solved if people of different races and cultures can find a way of living and working together. It would be tragic indeed if that issue were to destroy the institution which has epitomised this: the Commonwealth.

(Sir) Peter Preston,
Greville Park Avenue,
Ashtead, Surrey.

British firms that help to defend apartheid

Those who claim exclusive occupation of the high moral ground should at least try to ensure that their basic information is correct.

Mrs Thatcher endorses the notion that industry in South Africa is in the forefront of those fighting apartheid (July 20) and that British companies in South Africa are working in the interests of the oppressed rather than those of the regime. This is just one of the many factual inaccuracies upon which her opinions on sanctions and professed morality are based.

In the effort to protect their investments, South African and foreign companies have been trying to distance themselves from the worst excesses of the apartheid system with a series of declarations, charters, statements to shareholders, newspaper advertisements, and programmes of action. Not surprisingly, their propaganda omits all reference to the way in which their activities in the country support and strengthen apartheid.

It is not only that they buy "defence bonds" and pay taxes to Pretoria which are used to increase the regime's repressive and aggressive capacity; nor that they provide strategic technology, equipment and fuel to the police and military; nor that their directors accept appointments to serve on key policy-making bodies, including those that plan to ensure adequate manpower for the regime's military forces; nor even that they are engaged in the production of arms and other military equipment.

British companies effectively are paying the salaries of many of the troops deployed in the townships and committing the brutalities which the regime is so anxious to keep off TV screens. They are among the many companies which ensure that their conscripted white employees, fighting to defend apartheid, continue to enjoy the privilege of white incomes by making up the difference between their army and civilian salaries and, in some cases, continuing to pay them their full civilian salaries. They do this voluntarily.

At installations which have been designated "national keypoints" — including those owned and operated by BP, ICI and Shell — the companies finance (at shareholders' expense) and provide facilities for the training and equipping of industrial commandos in collaboration with SADF commanders, who have open access to the premises. The training includes "counter-insurgency" and "riot control"; the units are incorporated into regional "defence" planning, which in South Africa means defending apartheid. Black trade union officials have identified white workers on the Caspirs operating in "unrest" areas.

Though companies are required by Pretoria's laws to keep secret their involvement in defending apartheid, the legislation itself is available and makes the requirements specific. Neither City boardrooms nor the British Government can claim ignorance.

Would it not be appropriate for Mrs Thatcher to direct lectures on morality to these companies, and ask them to preface their statements against sanctions with full disclosure of how they are assisting in the defence of apartheid?

Perhaps she could set an example by doing so herself?

Frene Ginwala
(Address supplied).

Knuckle ball

Just over two years ago I was present at a very exciting egg-and-spoon race, run with baseballs on ping-pong bats, by members of the history department of Peking University. It was part of the departmental sports afternoon in which all the professors (except one visiting professor) took part.

The competitors seemed to regard it all as innocent fun. But now I realise that it was the first sign of the introduction of competitive, capitalistic Western values and the undermining of everything for which the Chinese revolution was fought.

J. R. Pole,
(Rhodes Professor of American History Studies),
Oxford.

Osbert Lancaster: soul of wit



"After all, if Hitler is such a cad as to invade us over Whitsun, our place is obviously with our constituents." May 10, 1940.

SIR OSBERT LANCASTER, who died on Sunday, aged 77, was, for as long as I can remember, the best and the wittiest daily cartoonist in England, writes Mel Calman. Many people, I am sure, only bought the Daily Express for his pocket cartoon.

His drawings first appeared in 1939 on the William Hickey page and later he was promoted to the front page. He never looked down on his audience; he quoted the Bible, literature, threw in French phrases, assumed that everyone was as educated and literate as himself.

Sir Osbert created a miniature world that reflected the madder world outside. When Maudie Littlehampton spoke, she usually deflated someone or something that badly needed it.

Apart from his daily cartoons he designed superbly for opera and ballet. He wrote and illustrated a shelf of books — always with wit and elegance. His cartoon history of architecture, Pillar to Post, opened more people's eyes than any other book on the subject.

Sir Osbert went to school at Charterhouse, and went on to Oxford.

In the introduction to one of his collections, Signs of the Times, he wrote: "A professional preoccupation with the topical is the surest passport to oblivion, and nothing, not even women's hairstyles nor the music of the late Ivor Novello, dates so quickly as the apt comment."



"I take it the 'E' is silent, as in 'Merde'!" December 19, 1967.

Letters to the Editor are welcomed but not all can be acknowledged. We don't like cutting them but sometimes this is necessary to get them in the page — short letters stand a better chance. Send them to The Guardian Weekly, PO Box 19, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 1DD England.

Row grows over 'rift with Palace'

THE WEEK IN BRITAIN by James Lewis

THE Government, and the Prime Minister, looked distinctly tired when the Commons rose for the summer recess last week. The closing days of the session were particularly bruising ones, and the administration will need some new ideas, and a lot of luck, to see it through what may be the last year of Mrs Thatcher's second term in office.

The privatisation programme has run aground. The economy is still not performing well enough to stop the increase in unemployment and poverty. The slump in oil prices poses a serious threat to next year's promised tax cuts. And Mrs Thatcher is increasingly out of step with the Commonwealth and, quite possibly, with the Queen as well.

Reports, sparked off by the Sunday Times, of a rift between Downing Street and the Palace, encouraged endless speculation. Was the Queen really concerned about the Prime Minister's refusal to contemplate sanctions against South Africa, and about the Government's part in the American bombing raid on Libya? Or were the alleged differences a malign invention by a group of disaffected Tories to put the skids under Mrs Thatcher?

The Queen does not reveal her innermost thoughts; nor is anything ever said about the weekly exchanges between Prime Minister and monarch. So how could there be a "constitutional crisis?" The Sunday Times's story, it turned out, was based on an unattributable briefing given by the Palace's urbane press spokesman, Mr Michael Shea, who admitted providing a background for a fairly anodyne feature on the monarchy, which the paper also printed, but firmly denied saying anything that could have caused the resulting controversy. "I have no direct knowledge of the Queen's views on Mrs Thatcher," he said.

It was an episode which Mrs Thatcher could well have done without, coinciding as it did with the royal wedding and with the report of the select committee on the Westland affair, in which Cabinet ministers and senior civil servants came in for a severe drubbing. *(See page 4.)*

Opposition MPs were furious over a report which showed that nearly one in three people — over 16 million — are living on or just above the poverty line. Their anger was not only directed at the figures, which were the worst this century, but at the way they were revealed. Mr Frank Field, the Labour MP for Birkenhead, had asked for them a year ago, but the response came in a written parliamentary answer an hour after the Commons had adjourned. The reply did not contain the figures asked for but referred MPs to statistics lodged in the library, which had closed for the summer.

"It is obvious that the Government did not want anyone to know about this" complained Mr Field, pointing out that the number on the poverty line had shown a record rise — from 11·5 million to 16.3 million — between 1979 and 1983. The poverty line is put by the Government at £29.40 a week for a single person and £44.80 for a married couple.

The royal wedding was indirectly responsible for the official abolition of caning in schools. An amendment to the Education Bill, forbidding corporal punishment and thus bringing Britain into line with the rest of Europe, was carried in the Commons by just one vote. Twelve MPs, whose votes might well have produced a different result, failed to get to the House in time because of crowds of sightseers around Westminster.

Tory backbenchers joined the Opposition in angry protest against a government announcement that Royal Ordnance, the state-owned armaments manufacturer, is to be sold by tender to the private sector, only a few weeks after the planned public flotation of the company fell through. The Leeds factory has already been sold to the Vickers group, which has also been awarded a contract to build 76 Challenger tanks. Labour will try to refer the matter to the Monopolies Commission on the ground that the sell-off will jeopardise the country's defence requirements by putting the armed forces at the mercy of monopoly suppliers.

The monthly trade figures showed that the collapse in oil prices had cost Britain £1.6 billion in the first six months of this year. There was increasing concern in the City that unless this week's meeting of Opec in Geneva succeeds in forcing prices up again, the country's balance of payments could be seriously jeopardised. There was a sizeable deficit of £623 million on visible trade in June and it was estimated that, even after earnings from invisible trade, the current account would only be £77 million in surplus.

The brightest bit of news for th[e] Government was a leak from th[e] shadow cabinet to the effect tha[t] an incoming Labour governme[nt] would need to borrow £18 billio[n] a year — nearly three times th[e] present level of borrowing — [to] finance its spending plans. Th[is] would be after taking into accou[nt] the extra £3.6 billion whic[h] Labour estimated it can raise fro[m] higher taxation. The shado[w] chancellor, Mr Roy Hattersle[y] was said to have warned h[is] colleagues that they would have [to] scrutinise their plans more rigo[r]ously if borrowing was to be ke[pt] under some kind of control.

Three men were found guilty [at] the Old Bailey of plotting [to] dispose of gold bullion worth £2[…] million from the Brinks-Mat war[e]house at Heathrow Airport i[n] 1983. One of the men, Kennet[h] Noye, who was sentenced to 1[…] years and fined £500,000 for ma[s]terminding the plot, was found n[ot] guilty last year of murdering a[n] undercover detective, Joh[n] Fordham, who was stabbed in th[e] grounds of Noye's home whi[le] collecting evidence for the bullio[n] charge. Noye successfully pleade[d] self defence.

Noye's fellow plotters — Bria[n] Reader, Garth Chappell, an[d] Matteo Constantino — were se[n]tenced to nine years, ten year[s] and 12 months, respectively.

The gang was said to ha[ve] melted down the gold int[o] unmarked ingots and then sold [it] to legitimate dealers at its mark[et] value, using regional banks [to] launder the proceeds. So far, how[ever], the police have failed [to] charge anyone with the actu[al] theft of the gold.

25 per cent fewer Jews

By Walter Schwarz

"DISENCHANTMENT" with religion has helped to reduce the number of British Jews to 330,000, a decline of 25 per cent in 30 years, Mr Eric Moonman, chairman of the research committee of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, said last week on publication of a new report.

Only half of British Jews now marry in synagogues, and the population is also ageing rapidly, the report says. However, the dwindling Jewish population appears to be more religious, with enrolment at Jewish day schools up from 9,000 to 14,000 and synagogue attendances also higher.

British Jews will have to "readjust their self-image and get used to a figure of 300,000," said Dr Stanley Waterman, of the University of Haifa, co-author of the report with Mr Barry Kosmin.

The report says that the low rates for synagogue marriage were caused by "emigration of young people, civil marriages among Jews, non-marriage, new alternatives to conventional marriage, or outmarriage with a Gentile partner."

British Jews in the Eighties, available from the Board of Deputies, price £4.

Currencies slide amid Opec confusion

By Margareta Pagano and John Hooper

STERLING and the dollar collapsed in hectic foreign exchange trading on Monday as the Opec meeting adjourned in disarray after little progress on national quotas.

Persistent fears over falling oil prices hit the markets early just as rumours filtered through from the Far East pondering the imminent resignation of Mrs Thatcher. These were obviously off beam, but worries over the Government's poor prospects are firmly embedded in market sentiment.

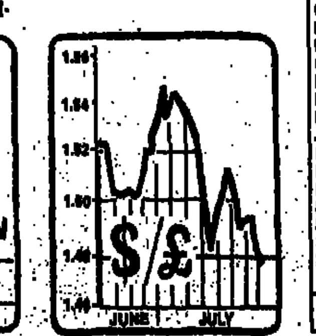
The pound crashed 1.5 cents against the dollar in early trading to $1.4670, but with the dollar also falling sharply, particularly against the German DM, it recovered to $1.4770. The DM gained nearly six pfennigs against sterling and the effective index against the basket of currencies ended down a sharp 1.3 points at 71.1.

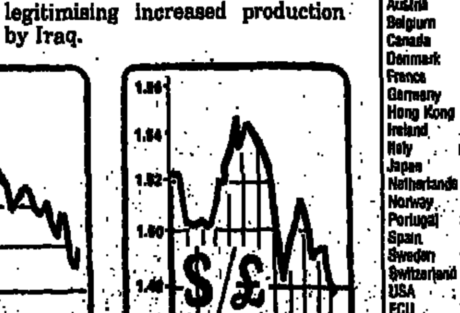
There was no intervention by the authorities who are clearly not concerned that this is a flight out of sterling but a temporary hiccup over oil prices. The dollar remained weak all day but dived in the afternoon after further bad news on the US economy. It touched a low of 2.1150 against the DM.

Opec's delicate negotiations on a production sharing agreement that would rally oil prices took an acrimonious turn when the Iranian oil minister said that Iran would torpedo a settlement by raising its output unless it got what it wanted. Iran's overriding concern is to prevent Opec's summer conference in Geneva from legitimising increased production by Iraq.

Baghdad's representative told a 90 minute full session of the conference at which the 13 ministers outlined their Government's views on the redistribution of national quotas, that his country, which is estimated to be producing some 1.9 barrels a day, was seeking to increase its quota from 1.2 to 2.3 million barrels a day. But he also insisted that, in any agreement, Iraq would have to have parity with Iran.

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FOREIGN EXCHANGES

	Sterling Rates July 28	Previous Closing Rates
Australia	2.4045-2.4180	2.4850-2.4895
Austria	22.12-22.16	22.40-22.43
Belgium	64.65-64.84	66.16-66.37
Canada	2.0494-2.0522	2.0520-2.0556
Denmark	11.79-11.82	11.95-11.98
France	10.13-10.16	10.29-10.32
Germany	3.12-3.13	3.18-3.19
Hong Kong	11.49-11.50	11.61-11.62
Ireland	1.0560-1.0570	1.0747-1.0757
Italy	2,160-2,164	2,180-2,185
Japan	230.56-230.94	233.92-234.48
Netherlands	3.52-3.53	3.58-3.59
Norway	11.03-11.05	11.12-11.14
Portugal	218.60-220.22	219.26-220.97
Spain	201.02-201.30	202.89-203.39
Sweden	10.37-10.39	10.48-10.50
Switzerland	2.51-2.52	2.56-2.57
USA	1.4765-1.4775	1.4800-1.4816
ECU	1.4777-1.4795	1.5029-1.5056

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The difficult art of recruitment

By Maev Kennedy

THE man tipped as the compro[mise] candidate for director of th[e] National Gallery last week de[clared] himself out of the running.

Such is the confusion that no[w] surrounds the appointment tha[t] Mr John Ingamells, the director [of] the Wallace Collection in Londo[n] may well end up with the jo[b] anyway. Mr Ingamells was one [of] nine candidates on the shortlist.

The trustees' original choice of [a] successor to Sir Michael Leve[y] who gives up the post in Januar[y] was Mr Ted Pillsbury, the direct[or] of the Kimbell Museum at Fo[rt] Worth in Texas.

Mr Pillsbury, said to be di[s]mayed at the anti-American fee[l]ing which greeted the news that [he] was giving up his $500,000 sala[ry] in Fort Worth to join the Nation[al] Gallery, backed out so late th[at] letters of rejection had alrea[dy] been sent out by the Civil Servi[ce] Commission to the eight unsu[c]cessful candidates.

One of the gallery's trustee[s] who said that Mr Pillsbury's ma[n]ner of saying no had put them in [a] difficult position, insisted that th[e] letters were not technically lette[rs] of rejection.

Mr Ingamells, aged 52, who h[as] previously worked at York Cit[y] Art Gallery and the Nation[al] Museum of Wales, is seen by th[e] art world as a staid but sol[id] choice.

Another of the unsuccessful ca[n]didates is convinced that the jo[b] will eventually go to the darke[st] horse on the list. The candida[te] declined to be named but claimed [a] very senior source for his rumo[ur] that the director will be Mr Ne[il] McGregor, the 40-year-old editor [of] the Burlington Magazine, [a] monthly academic journal on fi[ne] art.

Thatcher badly tarnished by report on Westland affair

THE Prime Minister sprang to the defence of her Cabinet Secretary and other officials severely criticised in a Commons select committee report last week on the Westland affair which also cast doubt on her version of the crisis last January.

Mrs Thatcher declared her full confidence in Sir Robert Armstrong, head of the Home Civil Service, as well as Cabinet Secretary, after he was censured by the defence committee's report into the Government's conduct.

She told a furious Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader: "I will not accept the committee's comments on the role of the head of the Home Civil Service, who continues to enjoy the Government's total confidence."

Mrs Thatcher faced a concerted Opposition attack after the publication of the report, probably the most critical since she came to office. It is the Government's hope, and the Opposition's fear, that the parliamentary recess which started the day after the report was issued, would drain interest.

The committee issued two reports, of which the one on the future of Westland Helicopters gives some support to the campaign of Mr Michael Heseltine for a European rescue. The other, on the Government's handling of the crisis, centres on the leak of a letter criticising Mr Heseltine written by the solicitor-general, Sir Patrick Mayhew.

The committee is extraordinarily critical of most of the officials involved in the leak, although the Department of Trade and Industry official, Miss Collette Bowe, who telephoned the Press Association with the leak, is an exception. It says: "In respect of the disclosure on 6th January those involved knew, or ought to have known, that what was done was wrong. The disclosure was made unattributably in order to conceal the identity of those concerned."

Ministers are accused of having given unconvincing evidence on this issue and Mrs Thatcher's own explanation of the leak is said to look "flimsy, to say the least."

The report is not conclusive in its implication that Mrs Thatcher knew of the leak before it was arranged — something she has firmly denied — but it says that before Sir Robert began his two-week inquiry at Mrs Thatcher's request its main finding was already known to the principals.

Sir Robert, Mr Bernard Ingham, press secretary at Number 10, and Mr Charles Powell, one of Mrs Thatcher's private secretaries, all knew that the then Trade and Industry Secretary had authorised the leak, the committee concludes.

Sir Michael Havers, the Attorney-General, is accused of having known of ministerial authorisation when he decided not to prosecute Miss Bowe who, he said, had acted in complete good faith.

Sir Michael last week issued a statement, by a Commons written answer, to clarify his position. He said that when he granted immunity from prosecution to Miss Bowe he had not been aware of the full circumstances. Nor had he known the source of the authorisation when he advised an inquiry.

But later Dr John Gilbert, a Labour member of the committee, accused him of trying to "wipe his fingerprints" off the episode by avoiding the question when he knew that Miss Bowe had received ministrial authorisation.

The report is unanimous, despite the Conservative majority on the committee. MPs were surprised by its strong criticism of the way in which Downing Street and the DTI organised the leak. It was an improper act, the committee says. "It is to the head of the Home Civil Service that all Civil Servants have to look for example and a clear lead in such things. In this case that lead has not been given." It agrees with the earlier recommendation of the Treasury and Civil Service committee that no civil servant should simultaneously head the Home Civil Service and be Cabinet Secretary.

Dr Gilbert attacked Sir Robert bitterly for his refusal to allow officials to give evidence to the committee, partly because they had already given evidence to him and it was a question of their "careers, reputations and lives."

He said: "Sir Robert compounds the hypocrisy by having the effrontery to tell us that we should not have these people as witnesses

By James Naughtie

because of an ordeal that he put them through quite unnecessarily."

Last week, Mr Michael Foot, the former Labour leader, called for Sir Robert's resignation. "No previous head of the Civil Service, when confronted by a unanimous report of a House of Commons select committee,would wish to stay in his post."

The committee concludes that Mrs Thatcher did not give "direct authority" for the leak of the letter, but it reveals contradictions in her public statements on the affair by listing her responses to opposition MPs. It challenges her version of the incident, which led eventually to Mr Heseltine's resignation — the ministerial "meeting that never was" on December 13 last year.

The committee notes that there is a direct conflict of evidence on whether the meeting was called. It was remarkable that Mr Heseltine was not allowed the opportunity to report to colleagues on the battle over Westland, it says.

In an analysis of the leaking of the letter the committee says that Mr Ingham and Mr Powell could have told the Prime Minister on January 7 what would be the principal findings of Sir Robert's inquiry more than a fortnight later. It had to be presumed that both officials were present when the Prime Minister discussed the matter with her law officials.

Mr Brittan was strongly criticised for refusing to give the committee some of the information which it considered necessary.

The Opposition was in full cry last week against Mrs Thatcher. Mr Kinnock, in a highly effective performance at the despatch box, told her: "You are in great danger of yourself attracting the reputation of being disreputable and improper."

He said: "Do you accept ministerial responsibility for those officials, particularly some of those named and directly accountable only to you and are personally associated very closely with you?" Mrs Thatcher refused to go beyond her earlier statement of "total confidence" in her officials.

So six months on from the moment of crisis the principals look little better, and some of them a good deal worse, than they did at the time.

Only Michael Heseltine holds on to most of his reputation in the Defence Select Committee report, but he could not hold on to his office as well. The only difference between him and the rest of the victims is that he is starting again: the others are just trying to keep going.

The report is a devastating indictment of Mrs Thatcher's operations, through ministers and officials, at the heart of the Government.

The charge of duplicity is more implied than stated in the report, but it is the theme that runs throughout. It portrays a world in which officials and ministers speak to each other without alluding directly to their shared knowledge, as if the instinct of eventual self-protection is always dominant. It suggests a degree of panic about the Heseltine-Westland campaign, threatening to undermine the whole image of Thatcherite efficiency and control and Downing Street, quite different from the statement of confidence issued by the Prime Minister.

In short, in confirms that the affair combined bungling and intrigue in equal porportions and did indeed reveal another side to the Iron Lady — the boss who couldn't keep control of her Cabinet, the straight-talker who allowed her officials to engage in carefully-contrived deceit and her Cabinet Secretary to spend a fortnight on an inquiry whose result he knew before he started.

The Committee has failed to implicate her directly in the leak but it accuses her, on the basis of carefully-sifted evidence, of almost everything but a straight lie to the Commons.

At the height of the crisis the Prime Minister gave a television interview in which she said by way of explanation of the goings on in the Cabinet Room and elsewhere that truth was sometimes harder than fiction.

Now, with the publication of the Select Committee report on the way the Government behaved, it is possible to see precisely what she meant.

COMMENT

A horror story of incompetence and intrigue

WHAT seemed clear enough in early spring, as the Westland affair spluttered to an exhausted close, is clearer still in high summer as you read the defence committee's tart résumé of events. It was all the most terrible shambles: a mélange of hypocrisy, double dealing, personal vendetta and manipulation, shot through with evasion and mendacity. It stinks.

What, in essence, happened? Britain's only helicopter manufacturer was heading for bankruptcy — partly because the Ministry of Defence, under Mr Michael Heseltine, couldn't get its ordering policy together quickly enough. In the autumn of 1985, it was obvious that somebody had to rescue Westland. Because this Government doesn't believe in rescuing things, there was a straight choice between America (the Sikorsky bit of the United Technologies conglomerate) or Europe (via a dissonant variety of competing national companies). The Government wanted a European bid to consider, but the Westland board — getting nowhere, understandably, banging Euro-government heads together — preferred the easy bird-in-the-hand, Sikorsky. If there was a European bid, it was clear that a Minister would have to coordinate it. Mr Heseltine, by then much moved by the plight he had helped to contrive, accepted that task with relish. And succeeded, beyond even his wildest dreams. But it had all been left too late. Just as Mr Heseltine was coming up trumps in December, Mr Leon Brittan at Trade and Industry had decided that Sir John Cuckney at Westland was so wedded to Sikorsky that Mr Heseltine's efforts should fade away.

This wasn't achieved straightforwardly however. Mr Heseltine was cut out of the argument when meetings that might have been held suddenly weren't. He did not take it kindly. He blew his top (for reasons of frustration and conviction stretching, perhaps, rather beyond this single issue). Cabinet responsibility — whatever that means — was shredded. Mr Heseltine began to lobby animatedly for his European option. Mr Brittan began to use civil servants in his department to lobby back. The Industry Secretary was ostensibly being even-handed. In fact he was plugging Sikorsky like crazy (perhaps, in part, because Mr Heseltine was tugging the other way).

And where, pray, was the Prime Minister in all this? Not playing the Iron Lady, laying down the Cabinet law. She was, rather, curiously inert, backing Brittan but afraid to confront or discipline Heseltine. At which point, Sir John Cuckney asked, a shade theatrically, whether taking the Sikorsky money would damage his prospects of future British (and thus, inevitably, European) contracts. Mrs Thatcher, obliged at last to show her hand in public, replied that it would not. Mr Heseltine became even more furious. He knew that Westland/Sikorsky might be a pariah for future European collaboration. And, in a "crude tactic," he reported as much to a supposedly concerned banker for his European consortium.

Still Mrs Thatcher wouldn't confront and couldn't control him. Instead, she "suggested" to Mr Brittan that he ask the Solicitor General's opinion whether Mr Heseltine's advice was legally correct. Sir Patrick Mayhew, consulted on a Saturday with only newspaper reports to go on, said on the telephone that it all seemed a bit sticky to him. Mrs Thatcher told him to write Mr Brittan a letter — a "confidential" letter — saying so. Hearing of the gambit, Mr Heseltine called Sir Patrick, offering to show him the documentation of European alarm he'd got stacked at the MoD. So when Sir Patrick wrote (as instructed) his opinion of matters to Mr Brittan, he emphasised how provisional and tentative his thoughts must be.

Then everything went berserk. Downing Street and the DTI had copies of this "confidential" legal opinion. They plotted (with Mrs Thatcher, magically unaware of anything, sitting only a few yards away). Mr Brittan was phoned at lunch and gave his permission. The political correspondent of the Press Association was called, and primed, by the Press Office at Industry, with a tale about how Sir Patrick had "slapped down" Michael Heseltine. Curiously, the bits emphasising the "provisional" nature of this judgment were left out. Other daily papers were briefed on this supposedly magisterial blow to Mr Heseltine.

Whereupon, everything in this tatty bit of conniving began to fall apart. Sir Patrick felt used and traduced. He complained to his returning boss, Sir Michael Havers. The Attorney General — political team player though he be — was alarmed and distressed. He demanded an inquiry. Infinitely slowly, because "in general terms" (whatever that means) Mrs Thatcher knew what had gone on, she wheeled forward Sir Robert Armstrong, the head of her own Cabinet Office (and of the Home Civil Service) to conduct a full-throated investigation. It cannot have taken Sir Robert two seconds to ascertain the bones of the fiasco. The loyal perpetrators (or fall guys) of it sit a few yards from his desk. Miss Bowe, the DTI lady who actually did the "authorised" and "covered" leaking, was duly interviewed. She (shades of Ponting) asked for legal immunity. Sir Robert duly traipsed along to Sir Michael and told him all about Mr Brittan's authorisation and Downing Street's involvement. The Attorney General — anxious that the sordid mess be nevertheless uncovered — gave that immunity.

What happened thereafter will remain fresh in most memories. Mrs Thatcher was shredded though a number of Commons question times and debates, on each occasion dragging forth a further "flimsy" version of the truth. Mr Heseltine impaled himself on his sword. Mr Leon Brittan eventually accepted all the blame going and did a Captain Oates act. Sir Robert produced a report which found simple "misunderstanding" between honest DTI and Downing Street public servants to blame. No Civil Service head rolled.

Last week's defence committee report doesn't pull its punches. It slates Mr Brittan for his tactical ineptitude and despairingly naive manoeuvres. It snarls about Downing Street's ploys. It examines the many hats of Sir Robert Armstrong and finds them ludicrously incompatible. But it is the punch that is never thrown that matters. Mrs Margaret Thatcher stands convicted in the report's pages of weakness and deviousness and incompetence. But the most compelling question — did she know in more than "general terms" about the vicious little melodrama mounted on her behalf by her underlings before she was forced to "inquire" into it? — is not really pursued, and a "not proven" verdict returned. Yet maybe that doesn't really matter. The mere recital of what happened is bad enough — in itself, in this isolated, lurid case, and beyond, for what it reveals about the way politicians in a jam behave.

All the characters — beside Brittan and Heseltine — are still in situ. Sir Robert, even now, asserts that his many-hatted mastery of every show in town is full-heartedly in the public interest and that his civil servants must be accountable only to ministers and to him. Mr Ingham is still briefing happily off the record. ("The objective of unattributable disclosure of information is to seek influence without accepting responsibility," says the committee.) Miss Bowe and her hard working team (along with Mr Charles Powell at Downing Street) remain on post, worrying about South African sanctions.

Was nobody at all — apart from "poor Leon" — to blame for this pathetic pantomime of governance? Are there no lessons to be learned? Sir Robert loftily reckons not. Mrs Thatcher is too busy denouncing "immorality" in other places. But what does the Conservative Party think as it reads this unanimous judgment from a committee chaired by one of the Prime Minister's oldest friends? Does it batten down the hatches, rally round, happy that anything goes in the rough and tumble of politics? Or does it look at its boots and rustle with anticipation as, six months on, even poor, loyal Leon begins to attack the leader? Westland almost brought Mrs Thatcher low at its demented height. Now, more coldly, it is a horror story to be weighed in the wider balance of Government dismay.



The Duke and Duchess of York leaving Westminster Abbey — picture by Frank Martin.

A family occasion

By Martin Wainwright

DODGING confetti, and running after the carriage to grab Prince William who looked as though he was trying to go stowaway, the Queen saw her second son off on his honeymoon in a moment typical of an unstuffy, light-hearted royal wedding pageant.

To hold a "family" ceremony, as both bride and groom had requested, seemed a pleasant but unlikely prospect in the presence of enormous crowds, squadrons of cavalry, the solemnity of Westminster Abbey and the splendour of Buckingham Palace.

But Prince Andrew and Miss Sarah Ferguson, created the 14th Duke and Duchess of York only 90 minutes before the ceremony, can claim, for the most part, success.

It was not at the expense of the solemn moments which played their due part in the day, but by touches — winks, the huge teddy bear on the going-away landau and an obvious delight in the whole spectacular — which find an echo on any Saturday at churches and register offices.

The long celebration began well when the police turned a blind eye to a ramshackle collection of tents and bivouacs which broke all the laws of St James's and Green Parks but kept the most devoted of the wedding-watchers contented and dry overnight.

The weather behaved itself as the morning drew on, providing spectacular cloudscapes over the palace as the carriages, folding tops cautiously in place, creaked up from the Royal mews to the main forecourt.

The Queen examined the sky, asked for the tops to be rolled back and the processions — hers, the prince's and the bride's — were off, down the corridor of guardsmen, banners and cheers, to the abbey.

As they rolled along, past the Whitehall Theatre (showing When we are Married) the abbey was filling with guests.

Scattered booing greeted the Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, when she slipped discreetly into the church, where the opposition leaders, Mr Neil Kinnock, Mr David Steel and Dr David Owen, were seated with their wives.

Then a rolling chorus of "Sarah! Sarah!" marked the arrival of the bride and her immense haberdashery of silk and satin, lace and innumerable beads.

As the Duchess went down the aisle she winked and gave wide-eyed grins at her friends but her mind was apparently preoccupied. According to a lip reader hired by the News of the World she was worried with her father, Major Ronald Ferguson, about whether her veil, secured only by a chaplet of flowers, would stay in place.

Like anyone might under observation by an estimated 300 million people throughout the world, the Duchess made a minor fluff of her lines. Intensive practice had failed to make the long carriage procession of her husband's names — Andrew Albert Christian Edward — into something which tripped off the tongue.

The robot camera behind the altar recorded it all, while the congregation, separated from the ceremony by the choir screen, watched on ten TV monitors and smiled as the "I wills" were echoed by renewed cheering from outside.

There was no sermon; the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, had given his thoughts earlier, privately to the couple and publicly on BBC radio's Thought for the Day when he claimed the day for "the celebration of the magic and mystery of love."

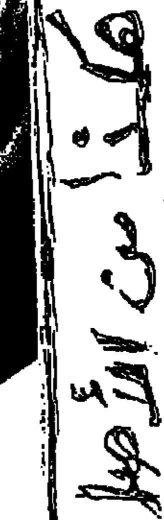
"Each of us can also make a vow today, to do everything we can to nourish and build up the stable marriages on which the future of our country depends," he said. "None of us today need feel we are mere spectators."

The strain of listening quietly to the language of 1662, even so, told on some of the bridal retinue. Prince William wound his hat cord round his nose, poked himself in the eye and started playing with the toy knife which came with his miniature sailor's uniform.

The balcony appearance at the palace was greeted by loud exhortations of "Give us a kiss" which the Duke and Duchess, after a little mime of incomprehension and cupping her hand to her ear on the bride's part, duly did.

Then the couple joined 140 guests for a "breakfast" of lobster, lamb and strawberries before changing for the honeymoon journey to the Azores.

A final touch, just as cameramen were packing away their equipment, came when the new jet of the Royal Flight swung on to the apron at Heathrow where the couple were taken in a helicopter from the Royal Chelsea Hospital. Twin flaps on the plane's tail opened to reveal the message "Just Married" and a large learner-driver's L-plate.



THE WEEK

TAMIL guerrillas blew up two buses near the northern Sri Lankan town of Vavuniya, killing 60 people in two separate attacks. In the first attack a landmine exploded under a bus, killing 37 people and wounding 20 others. In the second attack, a bomb on board a bus exploded, killing 31.

After two weeks of talks in Colombo with the Government, the Tamil United Liberation Front leader, Mr Appapilai Amirthalingham said he believed the Government was now ready to negotiate a political settlement. Mr Amirthalingham said understanding had been reached over the devolution of power, but the fundamental issue of the creation of a single Tamil territory within Sri Lanka remained unresolved.

AT least 32 people were killed and 140 injured when a huge car bomb exploded in Christian East Beirut. The Lebanese Forces, the rightwing Christian militia, blamed Syria for the atrocity.

The explosion, which followed a three-hour artillery duel on Sunday between the Muslim and Christian halves of the capital, heightened tension as Syrian and Lebanese soldiors prepared to enter the Shi'ite-dominated southern suburbs, stronghold of two potential opponents of the Syrian-sponsored "security plan", the Iranian-backed Hizbollahi fundamentalists and Palestinian guerrillas loyal to the PLO chairman, Yasser Arafat.

A CHILEAN army lieutenant has been held pending investigation and military trial over the alleged burning alive of two people, including a United States resident, Rodrigo Rojas, during anti-Government protests this month. The judge ruled that Lieut. Pedro Fernandez Dittus should face charges of negligence leading to the manslaughter of Mr Rojas and to grievous bodily harm to an 18-year-old student, Carmen Quintana, who is still seriously ill in a Santiago hospital.

THE US space agency, Nasa, announced that the seven astronauts may have lived for a short time after the blast that destroyed the Challenger spacecraft six months ago. Transcripts of voice recordings show the co-pilot, Mr Michael Smith, exclaimed "Uh Oh . . .!", and two of the oxygen sets recovered from the ocean floor were nearly empty. It would have been medically possible for the crew to survive the 2min 45sec descent to the Atlantic, though they would probably have lost consciousness after about 15 seconds.

MORE than 1,000 rioting Hindus stoned buses and police cars in the working-class Delhi district of Moti Nagar during a 24-hour strike in protest against the massacre of 15 bus passengers by Sikh terrorists in Punjab last Friday.

Police shot dead three rioters in Tilak Nagar suburb after a demonstration by militant Hindus degenerated into looting and arson. A Sikh temple was burned down. Three more victims died of stab and gunshot wounds and at least 50 other people were injured.

CHINA expelled the New York Times correspondent, Mr John Burns, a Briton, who was accused of espionage. He later denied that he was a spy and said a trip through central China which provoked the charge was legitimate. The Chinese said Mr Burns had entered a military restricted zone and taken "numerous photographs of classified objects".

THE US Vice-President, Mr George Bush, met the Israeli Foreign Minister, Yitzak Shamir, in Jerusalem at the start of a 12-day Middle East tour which is expected to help to capitalise on last week's Israeli-Moroccan talks and perhaps to improve relations between Jerusalem and Cairo.

Mr Bush will spend four days in Israel before going to Jordan. He is to decide after talks with the Israeli Prime Minister, Mr Shimon Peres, whether to go on from Egypt to Morocco to see King Hassan.

PREPARATIONS for a possible Reagan-Gorbachev summit meeting in Washington began when the Secretary of State, Mr George Shultz, met the Kremlin envoy, Mr Alexander Bessmertnykh, at the State Department. The meeting came amid some suggestions in the Administration that the superpower leaders might try to reach a preliminary agreement on offensive weapons at the summit, leaving the more thorny issue of strategic defences as an agenda subject for discussion.

THE Lockheed Corporation has lost about 1,460 classified documents, some of which relate to one of the US's most secret defence projects, the F-19 stealth fighter, which is designed to be invisible to radar.

In testimony before the investigating committee, Lockheed's chief executive, Mr Lawrence Kitchen, described the company's loss of the documents as "inexcusable" and promised "there will be no cover-up". *(Model stealth planes sold, see this page.)*

Soviet olive branch to China

THE Soviet Union will withdraw six regiments from Afghanistan by the end of the year and is considering pulling out "a substantial proportion" of its troops from Mongolia, the Soviet leader, Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, announced on Monday.

In a televised address from the Far Eastern city of Vladivostok, clearly aimed at Chinese and other Asian governments, he emphasised that the Afghan move was meant "to speed up a political settlement and to give it further impetus". Mr Gorbachev spoke of what he called the "urgent need" to make radical changes in foreign policy.

The regiments involved in the withdrawal from Afghanistan — three anti-aircraft, two motorised rifles and one armoured — would return to bases inside the Soviet Union. About 6,000 men would be involved, leaving nearly 120,000 still deployed on Afghan soil. The special crack units which have been brought into the country in recent months to counter growing rebel effectiveness in some regions will not be affected.

Repeating a pledge that has come out of the Soviet Union a number of times since he became leader, Mr Gorbachev declared that all Soviet troops would be withdrawn from Afghanistan once a satisfactory settlement was reached between the government in Kabul and the Muslim rebels who have been opposing it for nearly seven years.

His offer came on the eve of the UN-sponsored talks on Afghanistan which reconvened in Geneva on Wednesday.

But the suggestion of a withdrawal from Mongolia could be much more significant. The Soviet presence, mainly along the frontier with China, has become increasingly unacceptable to the Chinese since the bitter border dispute of 1969-70.

The removal of these troops as well as the Soviet presence in Afghanistan and the backing for Vietnam's presence in Kampuchea has consistently been seen in Peking as a major obstacle to any Sino-Soviet rapprochement.

Mr Gorbachev said: "The question of withdrawing a substantial part of Soviet troops from Mongolia is being examined jointly with

By Michael Simmons

the Mongolian leadership." In other words, he has now gone as far as he can in placing something like a diplomatic ball in the Chinese court.

Continuing in this conciliatory vein, he declared: "The Soviet Union is prepared, at any time and at any level, to discuss with China questions of additional measures for creating a good neighbourly atmosphere."

Then, to other concerned listeners in the Far East, he added: "The Soviet Union attaches great importance to the radical reduction of armed forces and conventional arms in Asia to the level of reasonable need." Mr Gorbachev suggested that the Amur river, along the Sino-Soviet frontier, which saw so many skirmishes in the dispute of 1969-70, should become the scene of joint projects for the benefit of both sides.

He renewed his proposals for an Asian security conference, which would bring together countries from throughout the area for multilateral talks along the lines of the European Security Conference held in Helsinki in 1975. "In our opinion," the Soviet leader said, "there are no insurmountable obstacles in the way of establishing mutually acceptable relations between the countries of Indo-China and Asean."

But his words will also be studied with care in Washington, and not only because they touched — fairly positively — on the notion of a second Soviet-US summit he suggested on reducing the activity of fleets in the Pacific.

"In the Pacific region," Mr Gorbachev declared, "the Soviet Union also shares a border with the US, with only seven kilometres dividing us . . . We clearly recognise that the US is a great Pacific power. It has important legitimate economic and political interests in the region."

Pakistan gave a cautious welcome to the announcement of the pull-out. A spokesman described it as "a welcome decision" and said he hoped it was "a small first step" towards the complete withdrawal of Soviet troops.

Western diplomats in Islamabad are sceptical about Mr Gorbachev's offer. They point out that previous public announcements about limited troop withdrawals subsequently turned out to be no more than troop rotations.

The US gave a cool reception to the Soviet initiative. The State Department spokesman, Mr Bernard Kalb, said that there was only one acceptable solution to the Soviet occupation — the prompt and complete withdrawal of all the Russian troops.

Pakistan halts supply of missiles, page 16.

Reagan in dilemma on hostages

By Alex Brummer in Washington

THE Reagan Administration was forced on to the defensive on Sunday over its refusal to negotiate with terrorists as anxious relatives of remaining hostages in Lebanon responded with fear to the video tape carried by Father Lawrence Jenco, who returned to freedom in the West after 18 months in captivity.

US officials promised to "talk" to release the remaining Western hostages in Beirut, but stood firm against "negotiations with terrorists." There were strong suggestions that Syria had the power to improve its relations with the US by using its influence to bring out the remaining captives.

The joyous return of Father Jenco to a US base in West Germany was marred for many Americans by the haunting video tape he carried with him from a second US hostage, Mr David Jacobsen, who bitterly attacked White House inaction and apparently confirmed the "execution" of another hostage, William Buckley.

The White House sought to reassure an increasingly doubting and impatient American public that the US is doing all it can to free the remaining American and other captives in Lebanon. "We're working very hard to secure the release," a spokesman told correspondents, "but we're not going to give in". The Islamic fundamentalist captors of the Americans are demanding the release of their brothers imprisoned in Kuwait for terrorism.

Father Jenco's arrival in Germany in the company of the Archbishop of Canterbury's special envoy, Mr Terry Waite, provoked the relatives of the other hostages including Mr Jacobsen, the head of the medical school at the American University in Beirut, and the Associated Press Bureau chief, Mr Terry Anderson, to renew their pressure on the Reagan Administration. They believe that while the White House waged an all-out effort last year to free hostages, held aboard a TWA airliner in Beirut, it has never made the same effort to secure their relatives' release.

Mr Jacobsen, in his video-taped interview, said: "My captors said this is the very last sign of their goodwill and that our release will be by death if the Government doesn't negotiate right now."

Caribbean clean-up

By Michael Simmons

THE Chief Minister of the Turks and Caicos Islands and two senior members of his government were sacked last week after a commission of inquiry into arson and corruption on the islands found them unfit to govern.

The islanders, about 8,000 in all, living some 300 miles into the Atlantic west of Cuba, have now been placed under virtually direct rule from their governor, Mr Christopher Turner.

In London, the Foreign Office minister, Mr Tim Eggar, told the Commons that the vast majority of islanders had welcomed British moves to end abuses on the islands. These moves had involved rewriting the constitution by order-in-council, a course recommended in the report of a commission of inquiry just completed under Mr Louis Blom-Cooper QC. Drugs are barely mentioned in the report, but the islands have long been seen as a smugglers' staging point.

The main finding is that the islands' Chief Minister, Mr Nathaniel Francis, his Minister of Health and Education, Mr Robert Hall, and the Minister of Works, Mr Alden Durham, were all guilty of unconstitutional behaviour and of ministerial malpractices. "Such conduct," says the report, "renders them unfit to exercise ministerial responsibilities."

Findings against Mr Lewis Astwood and Mr Oswald Skippings, two leading members of the Opposition, call for "more severe consequences". They are deemed "unfit to hold public office".

The works coordinator at the Ministry of Works, Mr Ernest Clarke, "should not again be appointed to any public office".

Congress pressure

Continued from page 1

the mini Commonwealth summit, staving off the pressure for sanctions long enough to allow for at least one more concerted EEC-US push to avert a spiral descent into violence and economic warfare.

Perhaps, just perhaps, the Botha government, for reasons that have little to do with major political reform, will decide on the early release of Nelson Mandela — but without lifting the state of emergency or unbanning the ANC. Probably designed, in South African terms, as a Machiavellian move to destroy the Mandela myth, his release now, if it takes place, would undoubtedly help Mrs Thatcher to neutralise temporarily some of the Commonwealth pressure for sanctions against South Africa.

By most accounts, Pretoria is already resigned to the prospect of economic sanctions. To a large measure it is hoping that the axe will fall sooner rather than later, so that it can settle down in fortress mode. Indeed, having delayed for so long with the threat of economic measures, it is now increasingly doubtful that the certain prospect of sanctions now could alter President Botha's determination to try to write the script for change in South Africa on his own terms and those acceptable to his National Party and to the South African Army.

Toy manufacturers do well by Stealth

By Alex Brummer in Washington

CLUSTERS of children wearing Burberry raincoats and with trilby hats drawn down over their eyes have been crowding into America's toy shops in search of one of the country's most marketable espionage secrets.

The objective is the acquisition of one of America's most highly classified secrets — the F-19 Stealth fighter. It is a project so clandestine that members of Congress who have appropriated billions of dollars to finance the research, development and production have never been told what they are voting on. Servicemen, responsible for operations of the aircraft, have nicknamed it Harvey, after the invisible rabbit who co-starred in a James Stewart film.

For just under £6, however, any schoolchild interested in learning the country's innermost secrets can acquire them on the High Street. This month's hottest selling model plane kit is the so-called invisible fighter, whose existence the Pentagon still refuses to acknowledge.

The production of the model F-19, whose configuration is said by the technical experts to be highly accurate, has outraged Congressmen who have been seeking even the smallest detail about the Pentagon's secret projects.

"It's bizarre," said Representative Ron Wyden, an Oregon Democrat. "What I as a member of Congress am not allowed to see is now ending up in model packages."

Just how secret the Stealth project is was revealed a fortnight ago when an F-19 crashed in the Sequoia National Park in California. The Defence Department imposed a news blackout, put planes into the area to patrol for intruders and ordered in armed guards. The fighter had been brought to California in a C-5 transport plane from Nellis air force base in Nevada, where 40 of the aircraft are kept in underground hangars out of sight of spy satellites.

The makers of the F-19 model, the Testor Corporation of Rockford, Illinois, say they have a winner. "You've got a bit of mystery about it — and that makes it exciting," said Mr Steve Kass, Testor's sales manager. "In terms of units sold this will be the No. 1 selling kit this year."

Some 100,000 copies of the model have already been snapped up and its prospects will not be harmed by the sight of a congressman brandishing the model before embarrassed Pentagon officials at a congressional hearing.

The kit comes in a box labelled "F-19 Stealth fighter" and notes that the jets operate "from remote, top secret airbases," and use laser technology as a guidance system. All the would-be sleuths now need to complete their mission is a map of Nevada and an operating manual.

Britain in spy hook-up with Pretoria

BRITISH and United States intelligence have been exchanging information with their South African counterparts about the activities of the banned and exiled African National Congress throughout the mounting crisis in the apartheid regime, past and present, US officials have finally admitted.

The exchanges have been systematic and regular, and on at least one occasion involved the presence of three South African military intelligence officers swapping detailed shopping lists with senior US and British agents during a high-level meeting held at Britain's major listening post, GCHQ Cheltenham, "in the mid-1980s".

They traded information gleaned from signals intelligence organised from GCHQ in Cheltenham about political activities, ANC bombing targets, and the movements of leaders like Oliver Tambo, in return for South African data on Soviet and Cuban military and political involvements throughout southern Africa, according to the New York Times.

A whole array of political, economic and military information about black sub-Saharan states, notably the frontline states adjoining South Africa, was also targeted and communicated so routinely as to acquire what is known in American tradecraft as "case notation" — designated numbers for computer transmission.

As the White House and Downing Street struggle to resist what they portray as "the emotional clamour" for tough sanctions, the political fallout of the revelations are potentially immense. In the US they assert that the Reagan Administration allowed the National Security Agency, GCHQ's equivalent, to reverse a Carter Administration ban on intelligence pooling with the South African Directorate of Military Intelligence. It had, in any case, been evaded by "elements in US intelligence agencies", although no data on the ANC had ever been forwarded before 1981.

Though the finger points similarly at the Thatcher Government, the New York Times account

By Michael White in Washington

suggests that ministers in the Wilson-Callaghan governments of 1974-9 may have some reminiscing to do, too. After the fall of the Portuguese empire in 1975, and the start of the Angolan civil war, in which a CIA covert role was sanctioned, "vast quantities" of listening equipment were shipped from Britain and Germany, much of it US-made, to bolster South African listening capabilities. All three governments supposedly looked the other way, the usually cautious newspaper reported in a front page report from which mention of the CIA is conspicuously absent.

The White House spokesman, Mr Larry Speakes, was quick to call the report "not true", while the State Department routinely refused to discuss "intelligence operations or alleged intelligence operations". But the charges, well documented by Mr Seymour Hersh, the experienced investigative reporter of the Times, caused no great surprise among some Washingtonians versed in intelligence matters.

Even more persuasively, the alleged intelligence links square with President Reagan's continuing obsession — so evident in last week's politically disastrous speech — with South Africa's strategic importance to the West. He tied it to Moscow's ambitions in the region and a veiled charge that many key members of the ANC have links with the Communist Party.

"It all comes down to what you believe about the ANC," one former senior Reagan official told the Times. Like current officials also quoted, he regards the ANC as "the bad guys, Soviet pawns" which made cooperation with Pretoria vital.

Mr Hersh's sources, from both Carter and Reagan years, were unable to say what use the South Africans had made of the information they received either to prevent ANC attacks or to lauch their own controversial attacks on targets inside the front line states. States targeted for intelligence, according to the Times, included Mozambique, Angola, Tanzania, Botswana, and Zimbabwe, the centre of some already documented double-dealing by Western intelligence agencies during the years when it was still the rebel colony of Rhodesia.

For Britain, the critical claim focuses on the Cheltenham meeting in "the mid-1980s," though a far more precise date is known to Mr Hersh, who has not published it to protect his sources.

According to his account, from several US officials past and present, senior US and British officials were engaged in what is called "tasking," the process of reviewing recent and future targets. When they had dealt with the Soviet Union and Middle East, the meeting, chaired by a British official with two senior NSA men from HQ — the top secret "puzzle palace" at Fort Meade, near Washington — among the Americans present, turned to Africa.

"At this point . . . three South African military intelligence officers were ushered into the room. The South Africans and the British exchanged tasking requirements — sophisticated documents outlining previous communications intelligence targets, such as a Third World embassy, and the frequencies on which they relayed intelligence.

". . . The delegations from the American and British agencies asked South Africa to continue its efforts to monitor Soviet and Cuban activity in Angola and Mozambique, as well as Soviet shipping and submarine activity around the Cape of Good Hope. The South Africans were asked to provide their reports . . . on a weekly basis."

Richard Norton-Taylor adds: In a reference to GCHQ, an American source said: "They are the heavies in this one." Sources close to the British intelligence community expressed little surprise at the US report, though they could not confirm the details of the meeting in Cheltenham in the mid-1980s, said to have been attended by officers from South African intelligence.

SA minerals 'not vital for defence of West'

By Alex Brummer in Washington

US strategic experts have said that the cutting off of Western supplies of vital minerals produced in South Africa would not be insurmountable, but would be at a financial and performance cost to the US and its allies.

President Reagan asserted in his South African speech last week that the loss of South African strategic metals, notably vanadium, manganese, chromium and platinum, would leave the West with "no other secure source of supply". Mrs Thatcher has made similar statements.

However, strategic experts said that while loss of vital minerals might be economically disruptive — affecting production of everything from stainless steel cutlery to the clean exhaust systems on American cars — there was no reason to believe that the loss of the minerals would cripple the West's defence capabilities. Products of alternative technologies, including such organic fibres as carbon filaments, could be substituted for the vital minerals listed. There are also some supplies of the materials elsewhere in southern Africa which could be airlifted to the West. They are now shipped via South Africa.

Each of the minerals is used in defence programmes of one kind or another, according to a Pentagon consultant, Mr Edward Luttwak, a fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies at Georgetown University. Platinum is used as a kind of filter for "gaseous diffusion" required in the preparation of enriched uranium for nuclear weapons.

Vanadium is a heat resistant mineral very important in building jet engines, manganese and chromium are both important for steel alloys used in making the advanced steel compounds for the modern components of weapon systems. Mr Luttwak noted, however, "it is always possible to substitute these components". This was not such an option in the second world war, when the Allies made strenuous efforts to prevent shipments of chromium and other vital minerals from reaching Germany.

While Mr Reagan and others have chosen to put the loss of the West's vital minerals in strategic terms, it is ordinary industry and transport which might be most immediately affected, since most Western countries maintain stockpiles of the materials for military purposes. "We're not saying the world would fall apart," argues Mr Robert Wilson, director of the Strategic Resources Office of the US Commerce Department. "If you had a cut-off, you would directly affect the employment of some 3.2 million Americans who work in industries which use these materials."

According to Mr Wilson's office in the years 1980-83, South Africa supplied 55 per cent of America's chromium, 49 per cent of its platinum, 44 per cent of its vanadium and 39 per cent of its manganese.

It is noted, however, that there are alternative suppliers, Zimbabwe, for instance, has 11 per cent of the world's chromium, which would certainly be enough to meet US strategic needs, if not enough to satisfy the voracious appetite of American car makers for chrome decoration.

While President Reagan saw vanadium as a problem, he neglected to mention that some 13.2 per cent of the world's reserves are in the US itself. While, therefore, it may be cheaper to buy vanadium mined by blacks in South Africa, the US's strategic position would hardly be at risk.

Commerce Department officials also noted that, unless there was a "complete cessation of production in South Africa," it was almost certain that the vital minerals would leak out. "People have a way of getting round embargoes," the official in the Office of Strategic Minerals said.

SOUTHERN AFRICA'S DEPENDENCE ON SOUTH AFRICA

ZAIRE: 75 percent of food, petroleum, chemicals imported through South Africa

ZAMBIA: Nearly 50 percent of mineral exports shipped through South Africa

ZIMBABWE: 90 percent of imports, exports flow via South Africa transport

BOTSWANA: 100 percent of petroleum imported via South Africa, 19,000 miners employed in South Africa

SWAZILAND: 13,000 miners work in South Africa

LESOTHO: 100 percent of electricity and 95 percent of all imports from South Africa; 110,000 miners working in South Africa provide 50 percent of Lesotho's gross national product

MALAWI, 95 percent of petroleum imported via South Africa, 18,000 Malawians employed in South Africa

MOZAMBIQUE: 60 percent of electricity imported from South Africa. 50,000 miners work in South Africa

NIGERIA, CHAD, SUDAN, ETHIOPIA, CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC, CAMEROON, SOMALIA, UGANDA, KENYA, EQ. GUINEA, GABON, CONGO, RWANDA, BURUNDI, TANZANIA, ANGOLA, NAMIBIA (SW AFRICA), SOUTH AFRICA, ZAIRE, MALAWI, ZAMBIA, ZIMBABWE, MOZAMBIQUE, SWAZILAND, LESOTHO, BOTSWANA

Germany an[d] Japan feel Reagan wrat[h]

By Alex Brummer

PRESIDENT Reagan, clearly c[on]cerned about the develop[ing] slowdown in the American eco[no]my, is accusing the US's allies West Germany and Japan of da[m]aging the health of the inter[na]tional economy.

In a broadcast to the Ameri[can] people Mr Reagan added his p[er]sonal authority to the sharp cri[ti]cism of the Bonn and To[kyo] governments already expressed [by] his Treasury Secretary, Mr Ja[mes] Baker, and the Federal Rese[rve] chairman, Mr Paul Volcker. [The] President said that "slow [or] negative growth" among our m[ajor] industrialised partners "hurts [our] economy".

His unusual criticism of [the] economic policies of the US's tr[ad]ing partners reflects fears in [the] White House and the Republi[can] Party that a slump in the economy this year could dam[age] prospects of hanging on to con[trol] of the Senate this November [and] beyond.

The US has been seeking [to] persuade its allies to cut inte[rest] rates and expand fiscal pol[icy] through tax cuts, to take [the] pressure off the United States.

The Federal Reserve, the U[S] central bank, believes that [a] one further reduction in the U[S] discount rate, a key guide [to] money costs in the United Sta[tes] is possible without risking a [free] fall in the US dollar on the fore[ign] exchanges. Mr Reagan noted th[at] there was plenty of room [for] expansion in "Germany and Ja[pan] which actually saw their gr[oss] national products sink in the fi[rst] quarter."

Mr Reagan, in a 10-min[ute] weekend radio broadcast from [the] presidential retreat at Camp [Da]vid, peppered his normally o[pti]mistic remarks with references [to] the weaknesses developing in [the] US economy.

He argued that large sectors [of] the US economy were struggl[ing] with special problems includ[ing] "oil, agriculture, steel and t[ex]tiles". He said the workers in th[ose] industries "are always on [my] mind" and "expressed his deter[mi]nation to keep the economy m[ov]ing".

The White House, which [is] shortly expected to reveal tha[t it] has lowered its growth forecast [for] this year below the four per c[ent] published in February, is c[on]cerned that the slowdown in tra[di]tional industries will lead to [a] burst of protectionist activity [on] Capitol Hill before Novemb[er] elections.

US whites 12 times richer than blacks

A FRESH urgency has been injected into the perennial debate about the best means of effectively improving the lot of black Americans by the official revelation that their white fellow citizens have not only almost double their income, but nearly 12 times their wealth.

Even more disquieting is the discovery, made in a survey of 20,000 households by the Reagan Administration's own Census Bureau, is that Hispanic Americans, comparative newcomers in their present large numbers, have closed the gap faster. At a median level of net worth in 1984 they emerged with $4,913 per household, against $39,135 per white family and $3,397 per black household.

Assets included were things like houses, cars, savings and shares — minus debt — but not cash, furniture, jewellery, and pension rights, which presumably could have slewed the imbalance even further. The black-white gap was smallest among black families with both parents present and highest of all among middle-aged whites with college education and double incomes.

Much of the Census Bureau findings are predictable enough. And the median family income gap

By Michael White

— $13,761 against $23,647 — is one in which optimists can claim that progress is being made since the gradual emergence of blacks into the American economic mainstream over the past 20 years.

What the unprecedented concentration of wealth rather than income as an economic indicator has done to jolt complacency is to underline how far there is to go.

With 30.5 per cent of black ho[use]holds, 23.9 per cent of Hispa[nic] and only 8.4 per cent of wh[ite] boasting nil or minus assets, [is] another way of saying that [the] urban underclass in the ghett[os] usually headed by women, are [the] poorest of the intractibly poor.

In the face of federal cuts [in] programmes designed to [lift] blacks out of poverty, in fi[elds] ranging from welfare to educat[ion,] Reaganites, including a few b[lack] intellectuals, are again stres[sing] self-help in a renewed de[bate] which, in its more euphoric [mo]ments, tries to present the P[resi]dent as a second Lincoln: [the] economic emancipator of the [only] ethnic group in America wh[ich] was tartly noted during the re[cent] Miss Liberty celebrations, [never had] their passage across the Atl[antic] paid for them.

Middle East map remains the same

Ian Black reports from Rabat on why Hassan went out on a limb and Peres went home empty-handed.

KING HASSAN of Morocco was looking distinctly jumpy as he spoke to his "dear people" in a live television address from the Royal Palace at Ifrane in the Central Atlas Mountains last Wednesday night, shortly after concluding two days' talks with the Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres.

The opulent oriental furnishings and the regal purple and white flower arrangements behind the King could not disguise his obvious unease at being the first Arab head of state since the late President Sadat to publicly meet an Israeli leader and — as if the risk in that were not enough — to have achieved what looked suspiciously like nothing.

Hassan II, descendant of the Prophet Mohammed, Commander of the Faithful and Monarch of The Kingdom of The Far West, rules a domain that lies more than three thousand miles from the heartland of the Palestine conflict. He can afford, as none of his fellow Arab leaders can, to go out on a limb and make spectacular gestures. This time, though, he may have gone just too far.

The King, clearly believing that attack is the best form of defence, berated his Arab brothers for criticising his decision to talk to Peres while themselves acquiescing to continued stalemate in the search for Middle East peace. "If my territory was occupied," Hassan all but sneered, "I wouldn't have waited this long."

But it is the content, much more than the timing of his talks, that matters. Even bearing in mind that the King's account of his controversial encounter must have been far from complete, his stress on the fact that Peres refused to discuss evacuation of occupied territories or to recognise the PLO can only be a bad sign.

"Basically," one Arab diplomat argued in Rabat last week, "King Hassan said there was nothing to talk about. All the ambiguity that was needed for any future contact between the Arabs and Israel has gone. How will King Hussein of Jordan be able to explain any future move towards the Israelis now?"

But few people believe that the Moroccan leader ever really hoped to make substantial progress in his meeting with Peres. "The King," said a veteran Western diplomat, "is not naive. He is a man of high culture with a deep background in Arab and international politics. He was not born yesterday." So what then, was his real aim?

The grim reality of the Middle East is that it is bedevilled by bitter and seemingly irreconcilable divisions in Arab ranks, and, with the impending takeover of the Israeli government by the intransigent Likud leader, Mr Yitzhak Shamir, it would hardly be too cynical to claim that only a fool could truly believe in movement.

Hassan, therefore, many observers conclude, hoped simply for a different result from the Ifrane talks. Calculating that the predictable and angry responses from radical Arab states like Syria, Libya and Algeria, would signify little more than sound and fury, he made a move that would help his position where it really matters — in Washington.

Moroccan-US relations have been in bad shape for nearly two years, ever since, to the surprise and consternation of those who saw the King as a loyal friend of the West and its regional priorities, he signed a treaty with Libya, a move which brought an end to Tripoli's longstanding support for the Polisario guerrillas fighting for the independence of the Moroccan-controlled Western Sahara.

The Treaty of Oujda, named after the fly-blown border crossing point where the strange alliance was concluded, has long been more or less moribund, but it has never stopped annoying Washington, which, especially since the bombing raids on Libya earlier this year, demands that its friends positively shun Colonel Gadafy and his truculent State of the Masses.

Opinion is divided as to precisely what the King hopes to gain by a move that is being generally interpreted more as a gesture towards the Americans than to Israel. A request for 25 advanced F-16 fighters — at a cool 40 million US dollars apiece — has not aroused enthusiasm in the US, especially when mounting foreign debts, continuing drought, falling phosphate prices and the ruinously expensive Saharan war have all but emptied the Royal coffers.

But whatever his specific goal. The thesis about Hassan's American orientation is strengthened by the fact that he chose to meet Peres at Ifrane only days after cancelling a long-awaited visit to Washington. "If the King had kept to his plan to go to the US he was going to have to go through a pretty tough time on the question of his relations with Libya," said a diplomat in Rabat.

It is too early to judge the long-term outcome of the Ifrane extravaganza. The least that can be said is that by revealing so little about what really happened in his eight hours of talks with Peres — and it certainly did not take all that time to hear of the Israeli's leader's two crucial "noes" and by promising to report back to his Arab colleagues, King Hassan has at least left the door ajar.

Yet it was hard, watching the Moroccan leader nervously explaining himself to his people on Wednesday night, to avoid the impression that it was all, as one veteran Arab expert put it, "just a poor imitation of what Anwar Sadat said eight or nine years ago.

"King Hassan gave us Superman II. He will certainly lose something after this meeting, but there is no comparison with what Sadat did when Superman I was playing in 1977. And if the other Arabs had followed Egypt then, we might all be in a very different position today."

Killings mark Bissau's decline

By Jill Jolliffe in Lisbon

GUINEA-BISSAU's execution of six political leaders, including the former vice-president, Paulo Correia, has underlined the deteriorating situation in a country which was once regarded as a potential model for the Third World.

The executions were carried out despite appeals from the Pope, the Portuguese President, Mr Mario Soares, former president Eanes and Amnesty International to commute the death sentences. All those executed were members of the minority Balante tribe. Observers fear that the tightening repression imposed by the president, General Joao Bernardino Vieira, has consigned Guinea-Bissau to the list of orthodox African dictatorships.

The first of Portugal's former colonies to win independence in modern times, Guinea-Bissau, came to nationhood in 1974 in conditions of extreme underdevelopment, but with a heroic reputation for anti-colonial struggle which earned it acclaim in the United Nations, a rich philosophical heritage from its founding father, Mr Amilcar Cabral, and strong international support to help it emerge from its poverty in the post-colonial era.

By 1980 it was evident that the dream had faded. Aid poured in by sympathetic Western governments had been syphoned off, attempts to build an effective economic infrastructure had failed, leading to chronic commodity and power shortages and — after a coup which overthrew founding president Luis Cabral — it was revealed that mass executions had occurred.

It was in the name of correcting these ills that General Vieira overthrew Cabral, who now lives in exile in Portugal. The operational commander of the 1980 coup was Paulo Correia, the man who was executed two weeks ago, along with five others who had also been Vieira's henchmen.

There was nothing strange about the fact that they were his former allies — according to observers in Bissau, General Vieira's recent behaviour has demonstrated symptoms of paranoia.

His increasingly dictatorial personal behaviour does not alone explain the trauma through which Guinea-Bissau is passing. With an unpayable external debt of $73 million the country is being squeezed.

Unauthorised tests on turbines led to disaster

By Martin Walker in Moscow

UNAUTHORISED experiments which led to the Chernobyl disaster were testing whether the turbine generators of the nuclear power plants could continue to provide electrical power even after the reactor had been shut down, the official Soviet spokesman said last week.

"When the station is shut down, the generator is still working," Mr Gennady Gerasimov, head of the information department of the Foreign Ministry, said. "The experiment was to see whether, if there is an accident, the generator could continue to provide energy for the station for another 40 to 45 minutes.

"This was a purely technical experiment, nothing special about it," he went on. "The point is not that the experiment was conducted. The point is that it was conducted without the necessary precautions."

Mr Gerasimov said he could not provide technical details of the experiments, but these would be presented to the International Atomic Energy Agency this month in a report that would run to hundreds of pages. He denied that the experiments had any military significance.

Two weeks ago, the Politburo said that the Chernobyl explosion of April 26 had come as technicians carried out improperly supervised and badly handled experiments on a turbine generator, without due safety precautions. Those responsible would face criminal charges.

The disaster claimed 28 lives, with another 203 people still suffering from radiation sickness. More than 25,000 of the evacuees have now been told they will not be returning to their homes, but will move into new houses that are being built under a crash programme.

Prague spring, Moscow summer

Michael Simmons on the Soviet manifesto

SPECULATION over the precise origins of the Moscow "manifesto" and why it should be published in the West will be fuelled by frenzied debate in every Communist country about the nature of its contents.

All the ruling parties in the Warsaw Pact, for a start, contain thousands of reformists who must have been aching all their political lives to get their teeth into just such a document. They have been restricted until now, however, by what they euphemistically call the "geo-political realities" of their situation, their sworn allegiance to the Soviet Union as the Pact's *primus inter pares*.

In Czechoslovakia in 1968, the Prague Spring protagonists emerged out of the corpus of a party which had previously been so conservative under President Novotny. In Poland, a dozen years later, a party which had appeared distinctly unimaginative under Gierek very quickly produced a million or more members who felt able and willing to join the ranks of Solidarity.

The reformists, in other words, who would doubtless go along with much of the manifesto, and certainly with the spirit in which it has been written, are those Communist Party members who know each other well, talk until the small hours about the art of the possible, but act the outward role of conformists.

But the same manifesto will also have given rise to some bent-pin smiles in Eastern Europe today. One will be on the face of Janos Kadar, the Hungarian leader. The other — more piquantly — will be on the face of the Czechoslovak leader who tried, and failed abysmally, to play the Hungarian card — Alexander Dubcek. He is now a minor forestry commission functionary in the wilds of Slovakia.

Kadar has gone some way in implementing, in a country less than one twentieth the size of the Soviet Union, some of the proposals that have now been put out by the Moscow group. The Hungarian economy is run, where feasible, on devolutionary lines; there is a choice of candidate at some elections; there is a measure of public debate about key policy matters.

But Kadar succeeded because, in 1956, he came in as a strong man who knew his way round. Like Moscow's own Yuri Andropov, he had run the secret police. Dubcek failed in part because he was a weaker man, who did not know his way round and was anyway ill-advised.

Even so, the Moscow manifesto contains many passages which are reminiscent in flavour and content of the Czech party's Action Programme, published in Prague in April 1968, and a seminal document itself when the definitive history of post-war European communism comes to be written.

In a tone remarkably similar to the Russians' manifesto, it began: "We want quite frankly to disclose what the mistakes and the deformities were (in post-Stalin Czechoslovakia) and what caused them so that we can remedy them . . ."

At another level, the manifesto will intrigue the East Europeans. That is in the extent to which it represents a further rejection of the thinking of Josef Stalin. In many ways, it moves another important step in the direction taken by Nikita Khrushchev when he began the dismantling of the Stalin myth in 1956: it is saying, as Khrushchev said then, that the Soviet system has grown too rigid, and that it can afford to relax.

In 1956, Poland emerged as the trail-blazer, bringing in Wladyslaw Gomulka, imprisoned under the conservatives, as chief innovator. Hungary followed suit, seeking to reject the claustrophobic Soviet influence on decision-making, but it took 12 years to introduce its "new economic mechanism," a visibly "different" sort of socialism.

The crushing of the Prague Spring led to a purging of reformists from every corner of Czechoslovak life. But this is not to say that the innovators have all gone underground in Eastern Europe. Almost all the countries have experimented in socialist methods — Bulgaria with big farms run on industrial lines, East Germany on joining different enterprises together in common cause, Romania in its more versatile foreign trade patterns, and so on. But for the most part, they have stuck to rigidly centralist, non-pluralist patt[...] of management, with very var[...] levels of efficiency, as well [...] inefficiency, mismanagement [...] corruption an inevitable result.

The whole process is pervade[...] the same time with an ideolo[...] self-righteousness and, often [...] self-seeking sycophancy tow[...] the Soviet Union. This attit[...] among other things, will be sev[...] ly punctured, if not exploded [...] the new manifesto.

But while one large segmen[...] the ruling parties will be, ove[...] or covertly, rejoicing at the m[...] festo's appearance on the deba[...] tables, an even larger segment [...] be acutely disturbed. These are [...] old guard, some dating even f[...] Stalin's time, but most now id[...] fied more closely with Brezhne[...]

Mr Gorbachev has done m[...] inside the Soviet Union to rem[...] the dead wood associated with [...] Brezhnev era. He has urged [...] East Europeans to do the sa[...] This manifesto, if it even begin[...] be taken up, will at least be a s[...] with which to beat some peopl[...]

The secret dream of a Soviet tomorrow

TO THE CITIZENS OF THE SOVIET UNION!

A GROUP of Soviet citizens with access to objective information have made a comprehensive analysis of the condition of the Soviet economy today, and of the perspectives for its development up to the year 2000; of the domestic political situation now and in the near future; and of the USSR's international position and the alignment of the forces of capitalism and socialism.

The results of this analysis show that our country has reached a limit beyond which lies an insurmountable lag in economic and scientific-technical development behind the advanced industrial nations; a reverse of present US-Soviet military parity in favour of the USA, and an intensification of the military threat to our country; a further weakening of the USSR's international position and its decline into a second-rate power; and deepening contradictions between the members of the socialist commonwealth, with a collapse of the world socialist system.

Because of the exceptionally grave situation facing our country, this group has decided to establish the "Movement for Socialist Renewal" (MSR), and as the first step, to bring to Soviet people's attention the results of our analysis, thereby offering for discussion a number of political and economic measures which may still rescue the Soviet Union from deadlock, and provide its people with their economic prosperity and economic freedoms.

After the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution, Lenin wrote that Russia had two alternatives: "either to perish, or to catch up with the advanced countries and overtake them economically."

Almost 70 years have passed since then, yet in all key indicators the Soviet Union has still failed to catch up with, let alone overtake, the advanced countries. Thus the USSR's gross national product is 50 per cent that of the USA. In industrial production, there has been, since the 1970s, a sharp decline in average annual growth-rates (21 per cent in the first Five-Year Plan, 10 per cent in the 50s and 60s, 5 per cent in the 70s, and 2-3 per cent in the 80s). This decline has taken place against an "explosive" industrial growth in the USA in these years (by 2 to 7 times), in the EEC countries (3 to 9 times), and in Japan (23 times). The Soviet Union lags 10 to 15 years behind the capitalist countries in its economic development, and this lag is growing. The USSR is now on the path to becoming one of the underdeveloped nations.

Lenin said: "Capitalism can and will be finally conquered, because socialism will create a new and higher labour-productivity." In 1968, labour-productivity in Soviet industry was 55 per cent, and in agriculture, 25 per cent, that of the USA.

Speaking of Russia's economic backwardness, Lenin cited as examples the structure of the Russian export trade, which was dominated by the so-called "colonial" goods, like grain, timber, fur and minerals. In the structure of the Soviet export trade to the developed capitalist countries in the 1980s, 85 per cent of revenue from exported goods is from minerals, while that from machines and equipment has remained for over 20 years at 2 per cent. From a country exporting grain and manufactured goods, the Soviet Union has now become a major importer of these goods (from 1970 to 1980, the import of grain and foodstuffs rose threefold).

The trade balance of the USSR with the capitalist countries is a negative one, covered by western credits. The Soviet Union is now one of the major debtor nations in the world, whose debts to the capitalist financial institutions (about 30 billion American dollars in the middle of 1983) place it third, after Brazil and Mexico. Projecting onto the future an analogous structure of the export-import plan, the Soviet Union's debts to the capitalist nations will have increased six-fold by the year 2000, and by the year 2005 the country will have been forced to spend 75 per cent of its export receipts just to repay its external debts.

Economics is the art of managing the economy. The defining feature of Soviet economic management at the present time is mismanagement — a lack of responsibility amongst senior people in the government apparatus for the state of the national economy; and the absence of any material incentives of office, factory and farm workers, or for scientists and the technical and creative intelligentsia, in the results of their work.

The country is short of metal, because almost a third of all metal is wasted, and in some cases this amounts to 70-80 per cent. The country is short of grain, because 30 per cent of it is lost during harvesting and transportation. The losses of other agricultural products, like potatoes and fruit, amount to over 60 per cent. The country is short of timber products and paper, although the USSR's timber resources are the largest in the world. And although the Soviet Union is one of the major oil-producing countries in the world, its economy suffers from a serious shortage of oil-products.

The Soviet Union leads the world in its wasteful attitude to its limitless mineral reserves. Over the past 10 years alone, the export of gas rose 30-fold; huge amounts

Full text of the manifesto

of raw oil are exported; the export of gold in some years amounts to 300 tons per year; and many other useful raw materials, many of them strategic, are also widely exploited.

Soviet people's standard of living is one of the lowest in the industrially developed world, including the member nations of Comecon. In the USA, a worker receives on average 1,000 rubles a month. The average monthly salary of a Soviet worker is 185 rubles — five times less. And there is an even greater disparity between the two countries in the salaries of the technical and creative intelligentsia, the military, and officials of the state apparatus.

Low pay is vitiated by difficult living conditions. Chronic shortages of basis foodstuffs like meat, milk and butter in a number of areas, and frequent stoppages of these products altogether in many others, have a bad effect on people's health, especially children's, and create an atmosphere of nervousness and uncertainty, with people wasting their free time, and even taking time off work, to search for food and stand in queues.

The Soviet Union on average lags behind the USA two-fold in per capita production of such basic foodstuffs as meat, milk, butter, cheese, eggs and sugar. In 1968, certain foodstuffs were rationed in a number of areas, just as in the war years. This was one reason for the rise in the child-mortality rate.

The constant disappearance from the shops of first, one series of goods and foodstuffs, then another and the eternal hunt for the most basic goods, and small everyday things, forces people to limit their range of interests to one everlasting search, leaving them neither the time nor the physical strength to satisfy their spiritual and cultural needs, and killing their human dignity.

The living conditions of the rural population, especially those not living on the central state and collective farms, is reminiscent of the life of the Russian peasantry in the early part of the 20th century.

To the developed countries, the living conditions of Soviet people wherever they work — in industry, transport, construction or agriculture, in the state apparatus, or in scientific organisations — are like those of a previous era. Poor labour organisation and weak industrial discipline; the primitive mechanisation and automisation of manual and labour-intensive work; the rudimentary computerisation of administrative and scientific work; infringements of the rules of safety, engineering and health; the systematic drives and speedups at the end of the month, the quarter and the year; the poor performance of the network of public eating places — these are the characteristic features of the great majority of Soviet enterprises and organisations.

At the end of the working day it is possible only with great difficulty to visit a cinema, theatre, cafe restaurant or sports ground. There are 3 to 5 times fewer cinemas for every thousand people in the USSR than in the developed countries of the West, and 10 to 20 times fewer restaurants and cafes.

In the public services sector, the USSR simply does not compare with the capitalist countries — or even with the developing countries. There is a desperate shortage of everyday services like groceries, savings banks and health-centres. Long queues have become an inevitable part of Soviet people's life.

Low salaries lead to the feminisation of men, who are unable to be the financial head of the family — with all the negative consequences this entails for their families, the education of their children, and the role of men in society as a whole.

Men's inability to support their families results in the masculinisation of women. Marx said that a society's progressiveness could be assessed in terms of the position of the fair sex. The Soviet of Ministers of the USSR has just adopted a resolution banning the employment of wome[...] heavy work. It has taken s[...] years for this measure to [...] adopted, yet it still remains [...] paper, and women continue t[...] used in those heavy, monoton[...] jobs in factories and in [...] construction which men will [...] take.

Since it is impossible to live [...] man's salary, women in the U[...] are forced to abandon family [...] children to find work in a fac[...] or office. But work does not li[...] ate a woman from housework [...] the care of her husband [...] children. The reason for the [...] pearance of so many prob[...] children and young criminal[...] that many children are not c[...] for at home, in the family, [...] have to care for themselves and [...] their education from the street[...]

In these social and polit[...] conditions, drunkenness and [...] holism flourish, along with pr[...] tution and thieving.

The Soviet Union firmly le[...] the world in its consumptio[...] strong alcohol: for every mem[...] of the population, including [...] fants, 11 litres of vodka and sp[...] are consumed a year, and betw[...] 1950 and 1984 alone, alcohol [...] sumption rose 4 times. 10 to [...] times more vodka is consume[...] the Soviet Union today than [...] consumed in Tsarist Russia.

Female alcoholism, which is [...] creasing particularly sharply [...] now on the agenda, and expl[...] the significant rise in the birt[...] mentally and physically impa[...] babies.

Alcohol has penetrated de[...] into the life of Soviet people, [...] has assumed the character [...] national disaster, which threa[...] the very future of our country [...] people.

There is a headlong collaps[...] the basic nucleus of Soviet soc[...] — the family. In 1913, there [...] 0.44 divorces for every 100 [...] riages; in 1965 — 17.94; in 197[...] 28.52. Since 1913, therefore, [...] collapse has increased 59 per c[...]

The social and economic deve[...] ment of our country in the mo[...] age is closely connected with [...] speed of scientific and tech[...] progress. The path to intens[...] production, the economy of m[...] ial resources, fuel and energy, [...] the rational use of labour [...] sources — all this can be suc[...] fully developed only with a [...] effective use of the existing sci[...] fic and technical potential.

The Soviet Union leads [...] world in the number of scien[...]

Continued on p[...]

Call for genuine involvement in Socialist self-government

Continued from page 9

Every fourth scientist on this planet is a citizen of the USSR. The number of Soviet scientists doubles every seven years, twice as fast as in the USA. The Soviet Union leads the world too in its scientific discoveries.

The first sputnik, the first cosmonaut, the first atomic electro-station — the Soviet Union has been a locomotive for scientific and technical progress.

The mid-70s witnessed a new technological revolution in the world, based on the latest discoveries in science and technology. The Soviet Union underestimated the significance of these new developments of world science for its national economy and the strengthening of its military potential, and spending 1.5 to 2 times less than the western countries on scientific discovery and experimental construction work, it began gradually to lag behind them in science and technology. There is an especially significant lag in such areas crucial to the scientific and technical progress of our country as the complex automisation and mechanisation of production (40 per cent of all work in industry alone is manual); in cybernetic methods of administration, and in the use of the automated systems (the use made in the USA of automation exceeds my more than eight times an analogous indicator in the Soviet Union); in computerisation, including the use of microprocessor techniques and optoelectronics, biotechnology and atomic energetics (the capacity of the average atomic power station in the Soviet Union is almost 4 times less than that in the USA); and in energy-saving technology.

The absence of any efficient mechanism enabling the national economy swiftly to adopt the long-term development of effective discoveries operates negatively on the development of technical progress in the USSR, as does the lack of any material interest to carry *them out. Scientific* and technological developments are carried out against the stubborn opposition of the entire social-economic system, which simply "chucks out" all attempts to instill the results of scientific-technical progress, like a living organism discarding a foreign body.

The USSR's scientific and technological backwardness has become chronic and unquestioned — as though the urgent problems of the country's economic development could be solved by simply importing advanced western techniques and technology, including the construction of whole factories "under the key," paid for with our limitless national resources of oil, gas, iron ore, concentrates and other vital minerals. The Soviet Union is living for today; our leaders give no thought for tomorrow, to the future of the country and its people. *"Apres moi le deluge,"* said Louis XV, and his courtiers marvelled at his wisdom. History now repeats itself in another country and another historical era.

This year, Soviet people celebrated an important date in their history — the fortieth anniversary of the Great Patriotic War. "No one is forgotten . . ." — that is the twenty million or more Soviet people who gave their lives for Victory — ". . . Nothing is forgotten" — those are the causes for such incalculable human losses.

An analysis of the early period of the war shows that the basic causes that brought the Red Army to the brink of catastrophe, and the Soviet people to the threat of enslavement, were an underestimation of the role and place in modern warfare of aviation and mechanised units, and the Red Army's lack of automatic weapons, effective anti-tank guns, modern tanks and planes, as well as the rough-and-ready reckoning of the higher military-political leadership as to the direction of the German armed forces' blow and the timing of this blow.

The Soviet Union won an historic victory in the Great Patriotic War, but the Soviet people could have achieved this victoy with far less human and material losses, and the road to Berlin need not have started from Moscow, Leningrad, Stalingrad and the North Caucasus.

Marxist-Leninist science defines politics as the concentrated expression of economics. A sick economic organism inevitably weakens the country's international position. The socialist camp is no longer a united and monolithic union of fraternal nations. The leading role of the Soviet Union amongst the socialist countries has been significantly weakened, and its authority is now lower than it has ever been in all its history.

The "eternal and unbreakable" socialist fraternity is collapsing before the eyes of one generation. The socialist camp has abandoned such former allies as China, with its billion-strong population, Yugoslavia, Albania and Korea. Romania is the West's "Trojan Horse" in Comecon and the Warsaw Treaty.

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union is no longer the recognised leader of the world communist and workers' movement, which has disintegrated into separate national and regional units of the working-class, unconnected by any united world view, or common organisational or party links.

The social-political regimes in Hungary and Poland and the GDR remain loyal to the Soviet Union, thanks to the presence of Soviet troops on their territories. For the first time in the history of the Soviet state, the Soviet Armed Forces are conducting in Afghanistan an undeclared and hopeless war, which brings glory neither to the Soviet Union nor to its Armed Forces.

Soviet foreign policy has experienced serious set-backs in the former dependent and colonial countries. From the vast resources invested in Indonesia, Egypt, Algeria and Iraq, the Soviet Union has reaped neither political nor economic dividends.

After the end of the second world war, fundamental disagreements between the USSR and the USA on the post-war political settlement of the world, and the superpowers' role in it, led to the "cold war;" to the division of the world into two hostile military-political unions; to a rivalry which spread to all points in the globe; to a growth of an arms race of unprecedented cost and wasted resources; and to a colossal growth in armed strength, unprecedented in peacetime.

Soviet diplomacy could not prevent the consolidation of the Nato military-political bloc, and the creation both east and west of potential centres of military aggression. For the first time in the post-war period, a series of governments, such as those of Japan, China and the Federal Republic of Germany, are openly making territorial claims on the USSR.

Soviet foreign policy is based on mistaken assumptions about the causes of tension in the world (the arms race), and pursues false goals (universal and complete disarmament). The arms race is a consequence, not a cause, of *international tension,* and to achieve the goals of universal and complete disarmament it is necessary to seek ways to liquidate the centres of international tension, the "hot spots" of our planet.

Over almost 70 years, the social-political system existing in the Soviet Union has been unable to achieve economic superiority over the capitalist countries either in the development of economics, science and technology, or in the well-being of its people; to guarantee the inviolability of its state borders and the safety of the Soviet people, or to secure the international authority appropriate to a great power.

Over almost 70 years, the leaders of the Soviet state have repeatedly tried to raise agricultural production and to provide the population with essential foodstuffs, and industry with raw materials, and it has repeatedly attempted to improve industry and to provide the population with essential goods, and the national economy with industrial goods.

At the dawn of Soviet power, Lenin wrote: ". . . we have passed so many resolutions that no one will be able to read them, let alone collect them." In the following years, starting especially in the 1960s, the Soviet state and party apparatus has been deluged with a stream of resolutions, decisions and decrees, unsupported by any organisational measures, and far exceeding the economic capacity of the country.

Thus the CPSU programme, adopted in 1961, said that in the following decade (1961-70), the Soviet Union would surpass the USA in per capita production; that all workers would be guaranteed a material sufficiency; that all state and collective farms would be transformed into highly productive and profitable enterprises; that the need for comfortable dwellings would be satisfied; that hard physical labour would disappear, and the USSR would become the country of the shortest working day.

By the end of the second decade (1970-80), the material and technical base for communism would have been created, guaranteeing an abundance of material and cultural blessings for the entire population, and Soviet society would have come close to realising the principal of distribution according to need. Thus the USSR would have become a truly communist society. "The Party solemnly declares: the present generation of Soviet people will live under communism!"

In the last 15 years alone, the Party's Central Committee and the Soviet of Ministers have adopted over 30 resolutions on agriculture, and some 20 on increased production of consumer goods. It is hard to find any sphere of the national economy in which resolutions have not been adopted by the higher organs of the party and an executive on the improvement of labour. But they have all remained promises, and no one has been brought up before the party or state for failing to carry them out. The Central Committee has not reported to the Soviet people and party the reasons for the collapse of the economic policies of the 20-year period covered by the 22nd Congress of the CPSU.

The country's continuing economic deterioration, and people's deteriorating living standards, indicate that the measures adopted have not replaced the laws of the existing economic system, which bans all initative, deprives members of the socialist society of any material interest in their labour, bars the path to scientific and technical progress and encourages eye-wash, codicils and the issue of low quality, and in some cases, totally unnecessary goods; the artificial creation of deficits; high, economically unjustified price-differentials for essential goods; and poor productive, labour and executive discipline.

The 27th Party Congress will adopt a "new wording" of the CPSU programme for the period up to the year 2000, which by any economic index is a huge step backwards from the "old wording." It programmes the Soviet Union's continuing lag behind the advanced countries of the West in industrial production, living standards and productive work. As regards the productivity of Soviet labour until the year 2000, for example, it is necessary for industry and agriculture to reach only 50 per cent of US production in 1984.

The crisis of the economic system is closely connected to the political crisis, which concerns such fundamental constitutional principals of the socialist state as the freedom of speech, press and assembly, of personal immunity, private correspondence and telephone calls, and the freedom to join organisations.

The ever-deepening political crisis affects the very foundations of the socialist state, not merely separate aspects of its activity. It affects the substructure of socialism, not just its separate outhouses or storeys. And however often it is declared that all flaws in Soviet society are due to the lack of the necessary initiative, rigorousness, principles, criticism and self-criticism in "certain people" or the "presence" in certain places and organisations of bureaucratism, red tape and whitewash; or the inadequacy "in a number of cases" of the administrative mechanism, the primitiveness of economic methods, the swelling administrative apparatus, the "excesses" of centralisation or decentralisation (which are apparently unconnected to the functioning of the most advanced social-political society) — despite all this, no one can propose any evolutionary solution to the present crisis. Moreover, the time for any possible resolution has already passed.

It is necessary, before it is too late, for the country and the Soviet people to take urgent measures of a revolutionary nature to rebuild the economic foundations of the socialist structure, and to carry out the necessary changes in its superstructure which can lead Soviet society from its blind alley; make the Soviet Union an example for other states as regards people's living standards and civil rights, and the development of agriculture, science and technology; restore its authority in the world communist and labour movement; and allow it to occupy its place in international society, as is proper to a great power.

It is the deep conviction of the MSR that a number of fundamental measures must be taken, in the first instance:

POLITICAL MEASURES:

1. Press freedom: The "Watergate scandal" in America, and President Nixon's resignation; the disclosures of the journal *der Spiegel* in the German Federal Republic, and the resignation of Foreign Minister Strauss; the "Lockheed scandal" in Japan, and the resignation and trial of former Prime Minister Tanaka; the bombing of the "Rainbow Warrior" in New Zealand, and the resignation of French Foreign Minister Hernu — these and many other examples show that a press independent of the government and the ruling party can play an important role in the struggle against corruption and law-breaking, even if these crimes involve the highest politicians in the state.

The creation of a press independent of party and state would encourage a more effective struggle against the crimes of individuals; it would inform Soviet people more deeply and comprehensively about life within their country and beyond its borders; it would help to make Soviet people better informed, and allow them to make a more objective assessment of events and state and party officials.

In a draft for a resolution on the freedom of the press, Lenin wrote: "The workers' and peasants' state understands by the freedom of the press . . . the granting to every group of citizens of a certain number (say, 10,000) of the use of a corresponding share of paper supplies and printing facilities."

2. To stop persecuting people for their political and religious beliefs, and to guarantee the freedom of speech.

The existing apparatus of repression, and the measures it takes, leads to hypocrisy, bigotry, unprincipled behaviour and servility. Soviet citizens have been trained to lead a double life — one, amongst their family and friends, where they can have their own thoughts, ideas, dreams and opinions, and the other, in official situations and at meetings, where they have to be puppets, programmed in official ideology, made to speak and act "correctly" according to the accepted stereotypes, to repeat the pronouncements of higher-ranking leaders, their ideas, their opinions on every aspect of human activity from foreign policy and questions of ideology to the width of a pair of trousers and the length of a jacket. The answer to the problem of

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Puzzle of mixed 'flavours'

SOVIETOLOGISTS and propagandists on all sides are unanimously curious about the original authorship of the "manifesto."

The suggestion that the whole thing was a creation of someone in Washington, acting true to the confrontational climate of the late 1980s, found no ready takers, though it was not an argument rejected out of hand.

Professor David Lane, the author of several books on the Soviet Union, felt it was a genuine, Russian-made product but he questioned the consistency of the writing. While parts could have been written by known academics on the fringe of the leadership, other parts — notably on the concept of political pluralism — did not have "the right flavour."

In the first official reaction to the document, a Soviet spokesman described it as "a provocation to disrupt the ongoing process of reconstruction of our society."

"It was written by some kind of authors who want to reshape our society," said Mr Gennady Gerasimov, the head of the information department of the Foreign Ministry. "There are a lot of problems with the document," Mr Gerasimov said. "There is no reference to a source, and it contains errors, particularly about the scale of the Soviet foreign debt. And why did it come up now?"

Challenge to grant Soviet people freedom of speech

Continued from page 10

people's "inability" to speak at meetings without notes is that Soviet people are forced to repeat the thoughts of others.

In some cases, the supression of free speech forces people to set up illegal and semi-legal groups of a political or religious nature. In some cases, it leads to prominent cultural figures — artists, writers and scientists — emigrating abroad, where they are active in anti-Soviet circles. And in some cases, much more worrying for the government, it leads to the organisation of armed attacks with political aims — as happened in Riga on one of the warships of the Baltic Fleet — or of highly-placed KGB officials going over to the enemy.

To grant the freedom of speech and the press would make for a healthier political situation in our country, strengthen the moral and political unity of the Soviet people, and help to educate them in the spirit of genuine patriotism and love for their country.

Without freedom of speech and the press there is no proper publicity. And "without publicity," said Lenin, "it is ridiculous to talk of democracy . . ."

3. To provide the constitutional conditions for the creation of alternative political organisations.

The one-party system operating in this country was created by Lenin as the political expression of the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the purpose of destroying the old social political system, suppressing the remnants of the exploiting classes, and constructing a new socialist society. Now that the full and final victory of socialism is complete, the dictatorship of the proletariat has fulfulled its historic mission, as regards its internal development, and is no longer necessary.

The government, which arose as a government of the dictatorship of the proletariat, has turned into a socialist, public government, whose political structure still retains the one-party system, as an instrument for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and excludes political pluralism.

In capitalist society, the political will of the ruling class is expressed through the bourgeois state mechanism of a political party (or alliance of parties), which in competition with other parties, including communists, advance the programme most closely corresponding to its class interests at that stage of its historical development. It may advertise to the people its programme's correctness during elections, and if the winning party cannot carry out its promises when in office, the ruling class will give its support to another bourgeois party at the next election.

This system of replaceability, and the competition of several political parties for the best defence of the interests of the ruling class and the best arrangement of its political and economic needs, helps to introduce new ideas into the running of the state and parties, and to create constitutional immunity against stagnation, sluggishness, inertia and conservatism; bureaucracy, irresponsibility, uncontrollability, the abuse of power and the other chronic diseases natural to a party permanently in power.

The creation in the USSR of different political organisations, all with the ultimate aim of building a socialist society; the competition between them for the best programme of action in the interests of our ruling class — the workers, peasants and intelligentsia — and for the right to represent their interests in the highest juridical and executive organs; their full responsibility to the people and control by the people (in alternative political organisations, freedom of speech and the press) in putting this programme into practice — all this would be a qualitatively new step in the development of Soviet democracy, and in the involvement of all Soviet citizens in genuine socialist self-government.

"Every citizen must be given the opportunity to participate in discussing the laws of the state, in electing his representatives, and in putting state laws into practice," said Lenin.

ECONOMIC MEASURES:

1. To observe the objectively existing economic laws.

According to the Marxist-Leninist conception of economic processes, there exist general economic laws for every social-economic formation, which operate objectively and do not depend on the consciousness or will of people. These general economic laws — on the development of the relations of production, distribution, exchange and consumption — are as objective for every method of production as are the laws of mathematics and physics.

The relations of property — private and public — to the means of production does not alter the action of these laws, and their infringement leads to slumps and crises in the economic system, to "skids" in the economic mechanism, and in the final analysis, to a slowing of economic growth and to economic lag. The most obvious examples of the disregard of the economic laws in the USSR, and their replacement by resolute pronouncements, was the liquidation of the Leninist policy of state capitalism (the New Economic Policy), and the collectivisation of the rural economy. In recent times, about 80 per cent of all collective farms are unprofitable and exist at the expense of the state (in 1984 alone, about 50 million tons of grain were imported, i.e., 25 per cent of the country's needs). While in the sphere of services and the manufacture of consumer goods, the USSR compares only with the most backward of the developing countries.

2. To expand the rights of enterprises, on a fully self-supporting basis.

There must be an expansion of the rights of profitably operating enterprises, along with a decentralisation of state planning and administration, and the transfer of powers from central to local organs, where the material goods are actually produced. While granting wide initiatives to local enterprises, their material responsibilities, to both consumers and neighbouring enterprises, must be increased. The economic stimulation of productive activity, and the payment to workers and officials for their labour, must be made more dependent on the output.

3. To offer opportunities for the development of private initiative in the sphere of services and the production of consumer goods.

The development of private initiative in the creation by separate citizens (or groups of citizens) of small enterprises for the manufacture of consumer goods, and in the public sector and in public eating places, results, as is demonstrated by the experience of the New Economic Policy, in speedy and significant improvements, without state capital investment, in the provision of foodstuffs and essential goods; in a reduction in state expenses and the creation of a supplementary source of revenue in taxation from private traders.

As Lenin said in 1921: "This (the freedom of capitalist development) is not something for socialism to be afraid of, as long as transport and major industry remain in the hands of the proletariat."

4. To allow Soviet citizens to rent state land and farm machines and land for cultivation and to repay the state with a proportion of their crops. The surpluses of agricultural production will be the property of the lessee, and can be sold in the market-place.

A comparison with agricultural production in the USA and the USSR demonstrates that leaseholders have huge potential reserves: in the USA, the average crop-capacity is more than double that in the USSR. Moreover, 7 times more labour is expended on harvesting 100 kilos of wheat in the USSR than in the USA.

The system of renting land and machines in order to raise capacity and productivity and reduce labour, and to promote the personal interest of lessees in the results of their labour, will lead to the creation of highly productive farms, and will ultimately provide the country with essential agricultural produce. It must not be forgotten that Russia is now an importer of grain.

5. Not to obstruct the development of private holdings on collective farms, allotments and dacha cooperatives, or the sale to town-dwellers of unused peasant houses.

The further development of personal plots and the sale of their produce at the trade can significantly improve the supply of foodstuffs to the towns and the peasant population, and lead to a reduction of market prices.

At present, personal holdings account for about 2 per cent of all land under cultivation, and contain about 20 per cent of all state-owned pigs, and over 30 per cent of the cows. These holdings thus yield on average 30 per cent of all meat and milk, 35 per cent of all fruit, 40 per cent of all eggs, 60 per cent of all potatoes, and up to 70 per cent of all vegetables. Furthermore, it should be emphasised that the state provides no funds for the development of these holdings, and does not pay their owners for their labour, and since there is no administrative apparatus (like party or executive committees) in charge of the landholders, it does not pay any administrative expenses.

6. To create the conditions for the development of private trade.

It is impossible to enact measures to make full use of the initiatives and interests of the people and the socialist state without making use of private trade, conducted by an economic coalition of private enterprises, lessees, smallholders and consumers in the market-place. The development of private trade through the creation of small trading enterprises is economically necessary for the functioning, according to Leninist precepts, of the economic mechanism of state capitalism.

"The exchange of goods and the freedom of trade inevitably means the appearance of capitalists and capitalist relations," said Lenin. "There is no reason for us to fear this. The workers' state has in its hands enough resources to keep these relations within proper limits . . ."

THE proposed programme of political and economic transformation is the highest creative development of Marxist-Leninist teaching on the state, based on the experience of socialist construction in the USSR and other socialist countries.

In the political realm, the Programme denounces all violations of the Constitution of the USSR by state and party organs, and offers Soviet citizens the real opportunity for such constitutional rights as the freedom of speech and of the press, and of political, creative and religious activity; independence of trial, and the recallability and accountability of the legal organs of Soviet power.

The new political structure will allow the realisation of the Leninist demand, fundamental for a socialist state, of the need ". . . to limit much more precisely the functions of the party (and its secret service), and to increase the responsibility and autonomy of Soviet officials and institutions . . ."

The new political order excludes the opportunity for people casually to gain high positions in party and state, and the repetition of such socialist anomalies as the cult of personality, voluntarism, empty pronouncements, irresponsibility and mental inertia.

In the economic sphere, the Programme foresees a doubling in the next 2-3 years of industrial production, and a trebling of agricultural production; a significant reduction in the import of grain and other stocks, and the provision of basic foodstuffs to the entire population of the country; the raising of trade, services and public eating-places to the level of the civilised countries.

The adoption of the Programme will help to release the vast creative resources of the Soviet people and the socialist structure, and will promote a flourishing of Soviet culture, art, literature and science, a significant improvement in the well-being of the population, a growth in the economic and military power of the Soviet Union, and the consolidation of the world socialist system.

The "Movement for Socialist Renewal" calls on all Soviet people, regardless of their age, sex or nationality, their social position or party status, to read the Programme for Socialist Renewal carefully, actively discuss it with their family, friends, acquaintances and work-teams, and to send any suggestions or observations in letters to the Soviet papers and journals, to the radio and television.

The "Movement for Socialist Renewal" expresses the hope that the Soviet mass media, challenged to grant people their freedom of speech, will do its duty by them and do everying possible to acquaint others with the Programme of Socialist Renewal. And that the Soviet legal organs, challenged to defend and guarantee the constitutional rights of citizens of the USSR, will not persecute these citizens for their political beliefs.

Should this Programme be published in the Soviet press, the leaders of the Movement for Socialist Renewal are prepared to appear on Central television to discuss the problems touched on in their programme.

"Movement for Socialist Renewal," November 21, 1985. Leningrad.

COMMENT

Loyal voices of change from within

THE forcefully argued manifesto for reform drawn up in the Soviet Union, and published in full on pages 9, 10 and 11, is obviously the work of people with some seniority in the system and dedicated to a socialist future for their country. It points persuasively, but with unfamiliar detail, at the miserable consequences of the bureaucratic centralism which have characterised past decades. Those failings are clear enough to anyone observing the Soviet Union from outside. They must be much more so to those who stand in the queue for the fleeting appearance of an item taken for granted, and off the shelf, in the industrialised West. Low pay and the sheer amount of time and effort involved in the day-to-day exercise of keeping house is a recurrent theme in the indictment of systemic failures. (If they are indeed senior in the system, the authors must have ventured beyond the privileged shopping centres which the upper echelons keep for themselves.) The great pity, therefore, is that a rational agenda for reform should make its first public appearance in the West. That in itself must hamper rather than help the authors, and not only the authors but any in the Soviet hierarchy who secretly sympathise with much that is said.

As the manifesto points out, Soviet citizens have been trained to live a double life, critical in private, laudatory in public, of anything concerning the State and its rulers. That inherent falsehood at the heart of the Soviet system is the first shortcoming to be overcome if the rest are to be tackled in turn. But so deeply is it embedded that the authors may now be accused, again falsely, of disloyalty and worse; and the task of those radical reformers who have found their way on to an essentially conservative Central Committee will be that much more difficult. Against that must be set the date, November, 1985, of drafting of the manifesto. At that time Mikhail Gorbachev had been in office for a mere eight months. He has had only 16 months up to now. That is too short a time for any reformist yearnings of his own, some of which he has made apparent, to prevail over the encrusted caution brought about by years of conformity.

The repeated and unfavourable comparison between Soviet economic performance and that in the West puts in writing what was a familiar admission in Khrushchev's day but has since been publicly ignored. It has been ignored because the economic and political are, for the reasons given in the manifesto, inseparably linked. There was no opportunity under Brezhnev or his aged successors to make any kind of reasoned challenge to the system which had served them well, was the only one they knew, and could so easily be derived from Marxist canons. Today's authors do not see themselves as living in that closed world. We in the West do not live in a closed world either, and were the manifest failures and oppressions which accompany Soviet Communism to wither away, the West would have to acknowledge that it too has something to learn.

It is common to the renewal movement and to Mr Gorbachev that the economy needs radical overhaul, and it is doubtful whether that can come about solely by relaxations of central planning and encouragement of individual initiative. The Soviet Union, like most industrial countries, spends too much on defence, but in the Soviet case the expenditure comes from a much smaller discretionary budget. It has frequently been argued in these columns, in opposition to formidable counsels in the United States, that self-interest as much as common humanity requires the West actively to help the Soviet economy rather than attempt to demonstrate the bankruptcy of Communism by driving it into the ground. The analysis fresh from Moscow strengthens that view, but it needs to be expressed to President Reagan by members of Congress who look beyond the sterilities offered on this subject by the Pentagon.

It may not be difficult for Mr Gorbachev to swallow the economic recommendations of the Movement for Socialist Renewal. They are the logical extension of policies he has made his own, though here again he cannot transform so sluggish a system with the weight of years upon it overnight. But what of the political reforms that go with them? The authors of the manifesto say that Socialism is now so thoroughly entrenched that the "dictatorship of the proletariat has fulfilled its historic mission" and is no longer necessary. Hence there is room for political pluralism, though with a common socialist objective, and for freedom of the press and of expression. No one knows how radical Mr Gorbachev believes it is necessary to be to give the kiss of life to a moribund economy, but nothing in his record says he is a political reformer. Not all the quotes from Lenin are likely to move him an inch if so serious a challenge as that is mounted against those citadels of Soviet orthodoxy, the indivisible Communist Party and the sanctity of Pravda. This is where the movement makes itself most vulnerable to the power of the State and where, in all probability, the authors of the document, if identified, may pay a price. But if the Soviet Union is to be taken seriously as a political and economic power as well as a military one, it cannot ignore for ever what its own loyal critics tell it.

An end to corporal punishment

THE FACT that corporal punishment in schools was abolished in the Commons by a majority of just one vote (maybe the result of a pre-royal wedding traffic jam delaying a dozen MPs) should not detract one whit from the importance of the decision. In a free vote, MPs decided by 231 to 230 to reject a Tory backbench move which attempted to retain the cane by reversing the recent Lords' abolitionist amendment to the Education Bill (itself carried by only two votes). Mrs Thatcher, whose decision may well have been crucial, did not vote. And so, more by luck than judgment, Britain has finally exorcized the ghost of Wackford Squeers, put a gallant group (Society of Teachers Opposed to Physical Punishment) into voluntary liquidation and cast one of the more public symptoms of *le vice Anglais* into superannuated oblivion.

Even if the vote had gone the other way it was surely only a matter of time before the backwoodsmen were overwhelmed by the sheer weight of the arguments. Children are the only people in this country who can be beaten legally. All the teachers' unions have been against it during the past four years; and they — not those MPs who still favour physical punishment — are in the front line if discipline breaks down. The practice was withering away anyway as increasing numbers of schools in both the private and public sectors gave up without any discernible effect on discipline. Four years ago the European Court ruled that parents oppposed to corporal punishment were entitled to have their views respected. The only way to implement this, without abandoning the practice altogether, would be either to create two classes of pupil or two classes of schools, both widely presumed to be unworkable. In any case it is confidently expected that the European court will soon rule completely against corporal punishment.

Britain is the only country in Europe which still allows corporal punishment. Yet it is we who have the reputation (whether well deserved or not) of having ill-behaved children. We hear little of classroom violence in France or West Germany, where there is no corporal punishment. In Sweden parents (let alone teachers *in loco parentis*) are forbidden by law to hit children. Good teachers don't need the threat of physical punishment to control classes and bad ones only gain temporary respite by resorting to the cane. And at what cost to themselves and the children? It is inhumane to beat children. And since it doesn't even have any measurable effect on discipline then the whole exercise becomes pointless as well as degrading. Now, in the year that remains before the law finally closes this disreputable book, we have the opportunity not merely to discuss alternative punishment — as the headmasters want — but to concentrate, in a new, cleared climate, on the organisation and running of schools themselves. It is perhaps symbolic that it has taken the might of the supposedly archaic House of Lords to shame the House of Commons into falling in line. A case maybe, of spare the Lords and spoil the Commons.

Commonwealth in the eye of the storm

AS THE boycotted Commonwealth Games close in Edinburgh, seven Commonwealth leaders are beginning a meeting this weekend in London to discuss South Africa — Mr Rajiv Gandhi of India, Mr Bob Hawke of Australia, Mr Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Mr Lynden Pindling of the Bahamas, Mr Brian Mulroney of Canada, President Kaunda of Zambia, and Mrs Margaret Thatcher of Britain.

If the talks fail, a full Commonwealth summit is likely to be called, at which the very existence of the Commonwealth will be at stake. The crisis arises from Mrs Thatcher's resistance to sanctions and from the attempt by some Commonwealth countries to try to get her to change her mind by the Games boycott and threats to leave the Commonwealth if she didn't. This was never likely to succeed and gave comfort only to Pretoria. It showed serious misjudgment of the likely British reaction, for even those in Britain opposed to the Prime Minister's policy do not like to be given an ultimatum by military rulers such as those in Ghana and Nigeria or leaders of one-party states, such as Dr Kaunda, described in one right-wing British newspaper as a "tearful buffoon."

By Derek Ingram

THE 18th-Century house in which the seven Commonwealth leaders are holding their fateful meeting on South Africa is crumbling and soon to undergo a major structural facelift. The seven may well wonder as they sit under the dazzling chandeliers in Marlborough House how far an analogy is to be drawn in terms of the Commonwealth.

The meeting will certainly be more fateful than anyone imagined likely when it was provided for at the full summit held in Nassau, the Bahamas, last October. If the seven cannont agree in Marlborough House, an emergency meeting of all the Commonwealth leaders will be called. Many have already made it known that if the whole future of the Commonwealth is to be debated then decisions must be taken by all of them and not just seven of the 49.

The emergency meeting could take place as soon as the end of September or early October. It would be only the second such emergency summit in Commonwealth history. The first, in Lagos in January 1966, was called to discuss Rhodesia. It was there that the British Prime Minister, Mr Harold Wilson, said that sanctions would end Ian Smith's rebellion in "weeks rather than months". In fact, it lasted another 14 years.

A crucial event on the opening day of the London summit, August 3, will be the dinner at Buckingham Palace to be given for the seven leaders by the Queen. News of the invitation fuelled speculation about the Queen's concern for the future of the Commonwealth and of her disagreement with the strong line taken by Mrs Thatcher against sanctions.

One prediction — perhaps the only prediction — that can be made with certainty about the London summit is that the South African government will be watching with rivetted attention. It will be hoping to see the meeting break up in disarray. There is nothing it would more dearly like to happen than the collapse of the Commonwealth. In the last few weeks it has seen tantalising glimpses of this possibility. The reduction of the Commonwealth Games to virtually an all-white affair played right into South African hands.

The Commonwealth has been a thorn in Pretoria's side ever since South Africa gave up its membership in 1961. It is, after all, probably the most effective global forum for resistance to apartheid. Over many years documents such as the 1977 Gleneagles agreement on sporting contacts and the 1979 Lusaka Declaration on Racism and Racial Prejudice have reminded the world of the South African problem. Commonwealth persistence in the struggle to end white rule in Rhodesia and its success in moving Britain to negotiating for Zimbabwean independence in 1980 finally outwitted South African manoeuvres to buttress the minority government of Ian Smith.

For these reasons, Pretoria has never ceased to use its powerful friends in Britain and elsewhere to undermine, divide, and devalue the Commonwealth. They are now having considerable success. In recent weeks politicians in Britain and major sections of the media have been falling over themselves to proclaim that the Commonwealth is a myth, existing only to satisfy the British ego and to cushion it against the reality that the Empire is no more.

It is no coincidence that almost all of those making this same point are friends of South Africa, most of them positively pro-Pretoria. The South African machine has worked long and hard over many years to fuel them with ideas. South Africa will be hoping for a summit outcome that stokes hostility in Britain to a Commonwealth which is pledged in several summit communiques to work for majority government in South Africa.

Its New Delhi communique in 1983 said that "only the eradication of apartheid and the establishment of majority rule on the basis of free and fair exercise of universal adult suffrage by all the people in a united and non-fragmented South Africa can lead to a just and lasting solution of the explosive situation prevailing in Southern Africa." Mrs Thatcher was a party to that communique.

A commentary on South African radio in July, praising Mrs Thatcher for her stand on sanctions, said that the Commonwealth, far from being threatened by disintegration, is already drifting apart. It said the whole "fiasco" of attempts to force Britain to apply sanctions unveiled the true intentions of "blackmailing" Commonwealth members. The language is the same as that used by a number of newspapers and commentators in Britain.

President Kaunda, who has threatened to pull Zambia out of the Commonwealth if Mrs Thatcher does not show that Britain is moving towards sanctions, is well aware that the demise of the Commonwealth can only be to South Africa's satisfaction, but his threat is serious and intended to focus everyone's attention on the seriousness of the situation. If carried out, the whole Commonwealth could begin to unravel in exactly the way the Commonwealth Games have done.

Mrs Thatcher is sure to come to the summit with a package of measures, but they are unlikely to be enough to satisfy the other six leaders. Without some dramatic change in her position and attitude, a stormy meeting is certain, but any withdrawal from the Commonwealth will not come at this stage.

A full emergency summit, which could be in India, will bring the Commonwealth back to a situation all too reminiscent of the Singapore meeting of 1971, which also brought the Commonwealth to the point of collapse. The issue then, as now, was South Africa — specifically, a British proposal to resume arms sales. At that meeting the Commonwealth leaders looked over the brink and did not like what they saw. They pulled back — and in the end Britain did not sell the arms.

Derek Ingram is the author of several books on the Commonwealth. He was president of the Commonwealth Diplomatic and Commonwealth Writers' Association of Britain (1972-74) and is now president of the Commonwealth Journalists Association. In 1978 he received the Commonwealth Press Union annual award.

Le Monde ENGLISH SECTION

King Hassan and Peres: agreeing to disagree

ISRAELI Prime Minister Shimon Peres's surprise visit to Morocco on July 21 and his two days of talks there with Hassan II took everybody by surprise and raised expectations of a breakthrough in the deadlocked Middle East peace process. But, as Le Monde correspondent Françoise Chipeaux points out, the conversations appeared to have got nowhere. King Hassan blamed the lack of progress on Peres, but the Israeli Prime Minister himself sounded a more optimistic note on his return to the Israeli capital.

The encounter was openly supported by Egypt, but the rest of the Arab world's leaders either took to their fences or condemned the initiative in no uncertain terms. Syria reacted immediately by breaking off all ties with Morocco. Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akhbar Velayati asked the Organisation of the Islamic Conference to strip Hassan II of his position as chairman of the Al Qods (Jerusalem) Committee, adding that the "Muslim people of Morocco will not allow their treacherous sovereign to pursue his treason." And in Paris, Ibrahim Souss, the Palestine Liberation Organisation representative in France, described the Ifrane summit as "gratuitous gesturing" that would only generate "illusions".

By Françoise Chipeaux

IFRANE — "Goodbye . . . I have nothing to say to a man who won't talk to the PLO as the one and only valid representative (of the Palestinian people) and rejects evacuation of the occupied territories."

This is how King Hassan of Morocco, in a 45-minute television address, summed up his two days of talks with Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres. All the same, he added: "I didn't agree to this meeting to negotiate or decide anything at all. I saw it as an exploratory meeting. I personally think it's cowardly not to want to listen to an adversary, an enemy."

What appears to be considered a setback may however be softened by the fact that Rabat and Jerusalem agreed to the publication of a joint communique in which each party committed himself to making the other side's views known. For Hassan, this means informing the heads of Arab states; for Peres, informing his government and the Israeli public.

Very reliable sources in the Israeli delegation say that Peres's double "no" does not mean he has rejected any new approach to the question.

The Israeli Prime Minister, it is said, has for example committed himself to exploring the possibility of a meeting with "authentic representatives" of the Palestinian people for initiating genuine talks so as to find a solution satisfying both the Palestinian people's aspirations and Israel's security concerns. Peres is also said to have promised Hassan that Israel would not extend its sovereignty over the West Bank and Gaza until the peace process resumed and so long as the negotiations continued. The question of sovereignty would be decided by negotiation. He is also said to have declared that negotiations with representatives of Arab countries and the Palestinian people aspiring to peace and rejecting violence and terrorism could be held within an international framework which the parties concerned would define.

There remains the question, of course, of determining just how far Peres will be able to go, given his domestic policy imperatives. Hassan II considers that Peres offers a better chance for peace than Yitzhak Shamir (the Likud leader, who is due to take over the Prime Ministership in three months' time) and he reiterated it in his television address. The Moroccans say it is now up to the Israelis, and they call on the world to bear witness to that. Officials keep emphasising that the talks were exploratory and aimed at putting forward and clarifying the (eight-point) Arab peace plan (which was adopted at the last ordinary meeting of the Arab League held at Fez, in Morocco, in September 1982). (The Fez peace plan implicitly recognises Israel's right to existence and provides for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.) Moroccan officials also remind the Israelis that the Palestinian people have an "imprescriptible and inalienable" right to self-determination under PLO leadership.

It was the origins of the new challenge he has just thrown down that the king of Morocco explained to his people. Addressing the Moroccan people first — he is assured of their wholehearted backing — he clearly pointed out his move was initiated by him and assured several times that he alone was responsible for it. He said he had not consulted any Arab or African Head of State about his initiative, which was why he refused both Peres's proposal to meet him in the United States during the visit he was to make there and US President Reagan's invitation to do likewise.

But Hassan's precise and highly informative speech, which did not lack a touch of biting irony, was also aimed at Arab Heads of States and world opinion which he called upon in this way to bear witness to his efforts to reactivate a situation which he described as a "tragedy". He pointed out he had not departed from the Arab consensus because the basis of his discussions, which he had determined himself, was the Fez plan. "Nothing permits arguing," said the king, "that the Fez resolutions prohibit contacts with Israel established within the framework of the plan. I met M Shimon Peres because no decision of the League of Arab States since its inception has prohibited an Arab leader from meeting an Israeli leader. And that's very important."

The king also condemned those who had "betrayed the sacred cause by taking up arms against an Arab enemy to defend non-Arabs." This was a clear reference to Syria's support of Iran in its war against Iraq, whereas Damascus has just broken off all ties with Rabat.

As the current president of the Arab League, Hassan pointed out he was entitled to open discussions with Peres without a mandate. He said he was planning to send "a message to each of the Arab monarchs and presidents to explain the reasons that prompted us to receive Shimon Peres and inform them of his doubly negative response."

The king then went on to warn against drawing parallels between his initiative and Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat's 1977 visit to Jerusalem: "He reached an agreement on recovering a piece of territory . . . In my case, there is no question of liberating any territory. If that had been the case, I wouldn't have waited until now to act . . ."

These have clearly been two days of hard talking and a breakdown would appear to have been narrowly averted on Tuesday. Last November Hassan revealed he was ready to receive Peres "if he has substantive proposals to make." It is hard to see what the Israeli Prime Minister brought in exchange for a visit to Rabat, of which he appears to be the main beneficiary.

In the circumstances, Hassan's gesture appears to be only even more meritorious. The Israelis' obvious pleasure is doubtless met today with very cautious satisfaction in Morocco. By not giving way on principles, Hassan demonstrated he could speak to the Israelis, undoubtedly hoping they would in turn see their way to making the necessary gestures. It remains to be seen whether this initiative will be supported in the Arab world and whether Israel will be able to respond to it. (July 25)

Reagan's backing for Pretoria

SNAPPING his fingers at growing pressure in the United States and the rest of the world in favour of applying economic leverage against South Africa, President Reagan has once again reiterated his confidence in Pretoria's rulers. The key to the future, said Reagan on Tuesday, July 22, lay in President Pieter W. Botha's hands. In the US president's view, Botha is still in the best position to help the black majority in his country to attain civic and political equality with the white minority.

Such a profession of faith may come as a surprise. However necessary they may be, the reforms Botha has so far initiated steer strictly clear of fundamentals. At the pace they are being introduced,

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it is going to take years for the curtain to ring down on the tragedy being played out in the cone of Africa, a tragedy marked each day by fresh violence.

True, Reagan has condemned apartheid as "morally and politically unacceptable", but it is the least he could do. Nor has he failed to present the Pretoria government with a whole list of demands which, in his opinion, should blaze the path to civil peace — the lifting of the emergency; a timetable for repealing the laws regulating apartheid; the release of all political prisoners; legalisation of all black political movements; opening of talks between South Africa's white authorities and other communities for working out a political system based on consensus.

All of which is not to be scoffed at, and if only half this programme were carried out a big step would be taken towards eliminating the scandalous system of apartheid. There is the question of the means for achieving this end. A growing number of countries and South African blacks themselves believe only strict economic sanctions could make Pretoria budge. The crisis shaking the Commonwealth today is evidence of the impatience of Third World states with London and Washington for their inaction.

On this point, Reagan's speech is nothing new. Like Margaret Thatcher, the US president is adamantly opposed to sanctions, and he even regards them as "an act of folly". To justify his posture, Reagan has replaced the South African problem — even more squarely than before — in the context of the East-West confrontation. The vacuum created by a withdrawal of the Western presence could only help the Soviet Union, he holds, and therefore endanger a sea lane of the greatest importance and the supply of "strategic minerals" which would be hard to replace.

That reasoning is doubtless secretly shared by many European countries, which is why they hesitate to take a harder line towards Pretoria. On the other hand, it has absolutely no chance of cutting any ice with the leaders of South Africa's black majority. Even if he could not have been expecting to be hailed as a hero, Reagan will perhaps be surprised to hear that Bishop Desmond Tutu described his latest pronouncement as "nauseating". This verbal violence gives a measure of the despair of a community which feels it has been abandoned and is getting ready to make many sacrifices to regain its dignity.

In the United States itself, the president is anticipating a tough fight with the Congress, which has taken a cool view of his proclamation of solidarity with Mr Botha. (July 24)

Signal to Israeli public opinion

By Jean-Pierre Langellier

JERUSALEM — "King Hassan II and I have agreed that the dialogue would continue." Returning to Tel Aviv at dawn on Thursday, July 24, Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres expressed the hope the Ifrane meeting would be followed up. He drew the preliminary conclusions of his visit to Morocco at the news conference he gave on his return.

"I'm very encouraged by the meeting," he said. "We agreed with the king that these were neither negotiations nor diplomatic conversations. It was a direct, frank and open dialogue. We started out from positions that were very far apart and very firm. They still are, at least in the way they are stated. However, I think the king and I found a certain common denominator at a practical level. We were able to meet alone. We tried not only to pinpoint the problems but also to explore the possibilities of settling them.

"I had an opportunity to explain the Israeli government's real position in detail. The king spoke in his own name, but also in the name of what he believes to be the Arab consensus. It has been very useful for me to find out precisely the point of view of the Arab League and of a leader who was looking for nothing for his own country. The king and I now know exactly what we're talking about. I have proposed direct negotiations without preconditions. Of course, I don't expect all the problems to be settled in a couple of days, but our meeting proves that one mustn't despair of obtaining peace".

In its initial reaction to what the meeting achieved, Israel has three main reasons for satisfaction. The first, obvious from the moment the news of the meeting was made public, naturally has to do with its tremendous psychological impact. The second stems from the Ifrane talks' repercussions in the Arab world. It is clear that the Peres-Hassan meeting is continuing to cause reactions. Israel observes it has had its effect, which it finds favourable; it is irritating and weakening the Palestinian and Arab rejectionist camp hostile to any form of dialogue with Israel.

The third reason for Israeli satisfaction is Egypt's attitude. Jerusalem has appreciated President Hosni Mubarak's prompt and favourable reactions to the Ifrane meeting. The Israelis hope the Egyptian leader will quickly follow suit and at last agree to meet Peres. The daily Ha'aretz speaks of a possible summit in the coming months in Aswan or Alexandria. This would presuppose that Israelis and Egyptians have previously agreed on the kind of international mediation to which they wish to submit the Taba border issue. With US Vice-President George Bush expected here shortly, the Israelis are counting on the United States to urge Mubarak to speed up his meeting with Peres.

All these reasons for hope do not however prevent the Israelis from clearly seeing that fundamental differences still remain on the question of reactivating the Middle East peace negotiations, whether they concern PLO participation in possible talks or the organisation of an international conference. At Ifrane, Peres defended the position of his coalition government. He emphasised the need for direct negotiations, a condition that has the Likud's support. And he took care not to go beyond this position which is shared by both Israeli parties. Which is why the right cannot blame him for anything. And judging by its first reactions, the Likud is not for the moment particularly apprehensive as a result of the Ifrane meeting. (July 25)

'Dessert' of democracy that leaves a bitter taste

By Claire Tréan

ISTANBUL — It was the end of Ramadan. Istanbul's great bazaar had spilled over right down to the banks of the Golden Horn and into neighbouring streets. The quarter was one huge seething mass of people: it was as though the whole of Istanbul had come down from the hills to enjoy the good-humoured, bustling market atmosphere that often precedes a national or religious holiday.

Despite the horrid heat, traders kept up a ceaseless flow of sales patter, vaunting the merits of cheap underwear or Turkish-made copies of American jeans (the original articles are available in a few recently opened luxury stores and cost the equivalent of half a government employee's monthly pay packet).

Most vendors had no licence to sell and were openly flouting the recent legislation introduced by the mayor of Istanbul in an attempt — unsuccessful so far — to put the city back on its feet financially.

Women customers at the market, stepping delicately to avoid treading on goods laid out on the ground, were dressed in contrasting ways: some wore brightly coloured peasant costume; others were swathed from head to foot in dark scarves and grey raincoats, an urban version of Islamic dress that makes no concessions either to elegance or to Istanbul's scorching temperatures. And everywhere there were swarms of children, chubby-cheeked and clearly well-fed, who had been dressed up for the imminent festivities.

Not far from the bustle of the bazaar, in one of those oases of quiet and leafy coolness that are to be found in Istanbul, I visited a square courtyard full of bookstalls. The books were mainly religious works, with gold-tooled bindings, plus the occasional volume redolent of the 19th-century romantic fascination for travels in the Middle East.

Every stall also displayed a selection of new books, among them the latest best-sellers. These included a book by a woman about women, and a translation of the sensational account by Günter Walraff, who disguised himself as a Turk, of what it is like to be an immigrant worker in West Germany.

Another best-seller was not available, as it had sold out — a selection of articles from the Turkish weekly, Nokta, one of the newspapers that has compaigned most effectively against violations of the rights of the individual over the last few months.

That day, the front pages of the daily newspapers, with their pastel colours and shrill headlines, showed a photograph of a woman student from Izmir who had been beaten up by a policeman because, in his view, her cleavage was too provocative. Not much fun, apart from notoriety in the press, for the young lady, who in any case had been quite decently dressed.

The women featuring on the inside pages of the same newspapers show a great deal more of their anatomy. They are clad in just a scant bikini to ensure that the newspaper does not get into trouble with the strict new legislation governing the protection of children.

The first Turkish edition of Playboy was snapped up so quickly when it appeared on the newsstands at the end of last year that Prime Minister Turgut Ozal, who has connections in religious circles, was forced to take certain counter-measures. Anything described as "pornography" by the authorities — and they cast their net very wide — now has to be packed in cellophane, and page-three beauties have been forced to adopt less suggestive poses.



Turkey has changed much faster in recent years than has its image in Europe. The morally strict regime that took over from the generals has not succeeded in imposing itself everywhere — and has allowed little pockets of tolerance to survive.

At the same time, there has been an Islamic revival in Turkey: the mosques can no longer contain the number of worshippers who come to pray there, and the fast of Ramadan has never been so widely observed as this year.

The Turks have discovered Japanese cars and Benetton clothes, but their average income has been steadily falling (by 50 per cent in the last eight years), and wealth has never been so unequally distributed. Before Turkey's military rulers went back to their barracks, they bequeathed an institutional straitjacket to the nation.

Yet the constitutional-cum-penal code which they elaborated in 1982 has never been so abundantly violated as now, and the secularist ethos inherited from Kemal Atatürk, of which they were the self-appointed guardians, has never been so overtly flouted in the last 60 years.

True, the Turkish police enjoy exorbitant powers; but public opinion has never been so deeply and sincerely shocked as it has been in the last few months at the outrageous treatment meted out in prisons and police stations.

It is hazardous, using European practices as a yardstick, to try to gauge how far Turkey has travelled along the road to democracy. One thing is certain: the Turkish military has had to lower its sights quite considerably since it handed over power to a civilian government in 1983.

General Kenan Evren's dream of giving Turkey an apolitical, well-ordered and conflict-free society — of the kind that only a military mind can think up — seems to have evaporated.

The generals had their *bêtes noires*. These included not only "terrorists" in the broadest sense, but all those who were allowing anarchy to grip the country, or who in their view, were actively encouraging it — politicians, journalists, intellectuals (especially academics), and trade union leaders.

But in a number of areas the rules have been made more flexible. Take the press. As long as they are careful to make one or two cautionary remarks when, say, attacking the military, newspapers are more or less free to do their job of informing and criticising.

Politics have changed too. The first setback suffered by the military was at the November 1983 elections, when the party specially formed to become the majority party, and headed by a general, performed disastrously (it has since been disbanded), polling many fewer votes than the party of Prime Minister Ozal.

Former parliamentary luminaries, in theory banned from the political arena until 1992, have made a noted comeback, using their henchmen (and women) as stalking horses. The former conservative prime minister, Suleyman Demirel, organises meetings, runs the True Path Party (now represented in parliament) through an intermediary, and plays host to a constant stream of party faithful at his Ankara home.

Former Social-Democrat prime minister Bulent Ecevit is the mastermind behind the party headed by his wife. Even Necmettin Erbakan, reviled by the military because of his ability to attract fundamentalist Muslims, is back on the political stage in the Prosperity Party.

The parliament that resulted from the dubious elections of 1983 has been completely transformed by the succession of splits, mergers and changes of political labels that occurred this May. It has now become more representative, as parliament includes members of virtually every party.

But by June, when the turmoil of May had died down, it was clear that many of the so-called new faces in parliament had already succumbed to the dangerous charms of political intrigue and party politicking.

General Evren, who left the army in 1982 in order to become President, wisely decided to accept something he could not prevent. As for Ozal, who was spared having to call an early election by the reshuffling of alliances in parliament, he had always been in favour of pluralism, allowing, for example, all legal parties to fight the local elections of 1984. This had the effect of turning Erdal Inonu's Social Democracy Party (SODEP) into the real opposition party.

This does not add up to democracy, of course. From a strictly political point of view, Turkey's newly-fledged pluralism will take a serious buffeting in 1988 from electoral laws which work in favour of a two-party system.

There is little hope that the ban preventing the big names of Turkish politics from standing as candidates will be lifted by then. Although the press has broken free in areas which the military regime once virtually equated with national defence, the straitjacket has not yet been entirely thrown off.

"Democracy," says a close collaborator of the prime minister, "is the dessert course of economically sound societies." His message is clear: democratisation has its limits, and no liberalisation should be expected in areas where it might compromise the extremely austere economic policy which forms the cornerstone of Ozal's overall plan for Turkey.



Ozal: austere recipe.

Ozal's recipe for the country's ills — which consists of a free-market economic policy, the opening up of Turkey to international business, and financial austerity — is sticking especially firmly in the gullet of workers and government employees because it has not yet succeeded in containing inflation (which is running at about 30 per cent). That sort of solution would be inapplicable in a comparably developed country that respected Western norms regarding trade union rights.

That is why Ozal has diligently reinforced the restrictive legislation bequeathed to him by the generals, which renders strike action totally ineffective, makes it virtually illegal to form a new trade union (only one is tolerated), and which in effect disallows collective bargaining.

However, the law alone would not guarantee the lack of industrial unrest currently enjoyed by the Ozal government. Statistics on unemployment and buying power have to be looked at in the light of the fact that family solidarity and the black economy are both very strong in Turkey. Moreover, while times are hard at the moment, they have never been really prosperous.

While he has clearly opted for drastic remedies as prescribed by the IMF, Ozal has allowed himself some room for manoeuvre: the tax burden is cleverly modulated and social welfare funds are set up on a one-off basis whenever the heat needs taking out of the situation.

This or that tax on imported luxury goods partly finances a housing fund. VAT has been introduced, but it is subject to an ingenious system whereby consumers are partly refunded at the end of each month on presentation of their check-out tickets — a way of getting the Turks to swallow the pill by turning them into tax inspectors.

Ozal's economic policy is intended to carry an educational message, as are his plans for new television channels. No doubt it will affect attitudes, though it is doubtful whether the poorest will pay much attention when urged to adopt a spirit of initiative or to accept "true" public utility rates.

For Ozal, the enormous advantage of restrictions on trade union rights is that they push the radicals into the arms of the left (in the form of the SODEP led by Inonu) because they cannot make their voices heard anywhere else.

Abdullah Basturk — former head of the leftwing trade union DISK, which was disbanded by the military regime — received a standing ovation at the SODEP congress at the end of May, while certain representatives of the diplomatic corps were booed by the audience. Despite apologies from SODEP leaders, the American ambassador preferred to leave the hall.

The incident was like manna from heaven for the right, which denounced the SODEP's inability to prevent leftist or Communist infiltration of its ranks. In any case, public opinion is mostly happy with a narrow political spectrum — any overtly Communist organisation is banned — and tends to equate leftwing radicalism with terrorism.

In addition to Inonu's problems in imposing on his party the social-democratic line he has resolutely opted for, there is the threat of a split which is kept alive from outside by former prime minister Bulent Ecevit, who has denounced all "collaboration" with the regime that emerged from the 1980 coup, and refused to ally himself with the SODEP, even in opposition.

Finally, it is not easy for the left to hammer out a credible economic policy at a time when Ozal is making political capital out of the innovation factor in a country which in 60 years had never broken away from the dogma of protectionism and statism.

But he has not got all the time in the world. He will have to bring down inflation smartly and attract foreign aid and capital. Investors from abroad, who do not mind going without the "dessert" of democracy, will at least be offered a "cheese" course by Ozal — free zones, concessions, abundant cheap labour, and so on.

But there is still the problem of stability. The solution cannot lie in a military regime or a regime under military supervision. Now the country has had a taste of democracy, it will not give it up easily, and will tolerate only those restrictions which it knows are temporary. In any case, the army gave up power of its own accord, without any plans for a further spell on the political stage after 1960, 1971 and 1980.

So it looks as though Turkey will have to combine stability and democracy. It is the only way it will be able to get accepted as a member not of the Western bloc, but of the much more exclusive — and more demanding — European club. That implies changes in political attitudes and behaviour which, for the time being, seem far from certain.

Since the beginning of the government's term of office, the national assembly has functioned in truly parliamentary fashion — which is quite a novelty compared with the bad habits that prevailed up to 1980. But the parliamentary flutter of last May showed that Turkish politicians tend to forget rather quickly what is really at stake.

Moreover, even if they do not want the army to run the country, many Turks still regard it as a kind of guardian angel. That explains why General Evren continues to enjoy undoubted popularity.

Last, but not least, disenchantment with politics has gone hand in hand with a spectacular reawakening of religious fervour, which is being encouraged by the prime minister. Islam seems to be compensating for the lack of normal trade union activity, and is also seen, in its dominant forms, as a factor of law and order. That is probably why the army has tolerated the gradual swing away from secularism that has been engineered by Ozal.

The left, which sees progress and secularism as inseparable, realises full well how difficult it will be to make up lost ground. Ozal's bid to reconcile Islam with specifically European values in a country like Turkey, which is still groping for its true identity, must be regarded as highly audacious, if not reckless.

(July 4)

Hiccups in the arms trade

By Jacques Isnard

Defence Minister André Giraud returned to Paris on Tuesday, July 22, after a round of official visits to the Gulf states — the United Arab Emirates and Qatar — and Jordan where France is hoping to sell arms in an international environment that has become intensely competitive.

Right: as Plantu sees it.

THE international arms trade is going through a period of increasingly erratic behaviour, and like all the other world suppliers, France too has not escaped its effects. Often, a customer's good or bad will, his decision to go back on a promise or put it off is all that is necessary to swell or deflate annual statistics.

Moreover, the bases on which such accounts are kept change from one country to the next and are not comparable. The triumphantly vaunted achievement of one day has to be reappraised downwards months later when oil prices, which frequently serve as a frame of reference, go into a free fall. The list of countries strapped for cash or bankrupt is lengthening. A supplier would sometimes even prefer to lose a contract and abandon it to a rival who would later very quickly regret having accepted it.

At any rate, 1985 can testify to the existence of such erratic behaviour in the international arms trade. Several cases provide the proof, so much so that the governments and industrialists concerned are finding it hard to draw any broad conclusions. Prudence nevertheless suggests that they remain on their guard in the coming years and the French defence minister is not wrong in the end to be pessimistic about his country's prospects of exporting weapons and military equipment.

France was thought to have established an unshakable position as the world's third largest arms supplier, very far behind the Soviet Union and the United States. But the fact is the competition with Great Britain is quite inconclusive. Just recently as last year, the United Kingdom ousted its rival, if statistics supplied by the US Congress are any indication, by becoming the second largest exporter — after the Soviet Union — of military material to developing countries. According to US Congress data, Britain's share of the arms market rose from 1.6 per cent in 1984 to 21.8 per cent in 1985, while the USSR's share, which is still the largest, dropped during the same period from 37.4 to 30 per cent, and the USA lost its second place, slipping from 20.6 to 17.8 per cent.

The US Congress report puts Britain's performance down to a major contract worth $5 billion on its own for purchasing planes that London signed with Riyadh, while British arms sales to developing countries rose to an aggregate value of $6.5 billion last year.

Saudi Arabia is therefore indeed behind Britain's success in 1985. But the United Kingdom has become disillusioned today since it was forced to agree to renegotiate the contract with Riyadh. With the collapse of oil prices, Saudi liquidities are not what they used to be. What's more, Saudi Arabia today finds itself having to raise a loan of $1.5 billion on the international money market — which is exceptional for it — to pay London's bill.

Similarly, analysts of French trade statistics in 1985 are expressing their satisfaction over the fact that French arms sales have been switched from the Middle East to West Europe and North America.

In fact, the arms orders received by France last year, which amounted to F44.5 billion, came from West Europe and North America (42 per cent of the total) and from the Maghreb and the Middle East (39 per cent). This runs against the solidly established tradition of France making between half and three-quarters of its arms sales turnover in the latter zone.

But one swallow does not make a spring, and this is just as true in the world arms trade, a phenomenon noted one year does not become a pattern. France's results show this change in the geographical distribution of arms sales, because the United States, or more accurately its army, contracted to buy from the French firm Thomson its battlefield tactical transmission system RITA. Thomson had, moreover, to agree to join manufacture of the system with US firms. On the other hand, if the official statistics for 1984 (with orders received for a total value of F61.8 billion) indicated a record result it was because of the F30 billion contract signed with Saudi Arabia for anti-aircraft missiles.

Apart from this one case, that is of a customer who is pretty nearly in a monopoly situation, the pattern of French arms sales has generally remained year in, year out, dependent on one or two preferred regions, roughly always the same, which are the Maghreb and the Middle East.

In 1985, for example, the success posted by aeronautical equipment (63 per cent of all orders received) was related to the sales of Mirage planes, especially the Mirage F-1, to the Iraqi air force. That pattern was again confirmed in 1986, judging by the determined efforts Dassault-Breguet made to sell its Mirage 2000s to the Maghreb and the Middle East (along with Morocco and Jordan) and, more recently, the Far East (Indonesia).

Incidentally, here we come upon another characteristic of the arms trade with two of France's potential customers.

With Morocco, for example, the aircraft manufacturer and the government are currently engaged in a fierce controversy, with Dassault-Breguet complaining that its efforts to sell 20 to 25 Mirage 2000s to Rabat got no real support from the government because it held that Morocco was on the list of customer-countries which are practically broke. In that case, argues the industrialist, there is a big risk — and the affront would be irreparable — of seeing the Moroccans buy American F-16s, whereas they have always been purchasing Mirages.

Next, Indonesia. In order not to miss out on selling Mirage 2000s to Djakarta in the face of competition from American F-16s and Anglo-German-Italian Tornadoes, Dassault offered to help Indonesia design its own fighter plane for the '90s. This is the first time the French aircraft manufacturer has thrown in engineering consultancy services to sweeten a deal, thereby contributing to strengthening a foreign national aircraft industry which tomorrow will be one of its competitors.

Given this state of affairs, which suppliers and customers are finding increasingly difficult to control, Defence Minister Giraud is making no secret of his concern about the foreseeable repercussions on the costs of the industries concerned. In particular, he is pessimistic about probable activities in the land armaments industry, which are stagnating and which he says are in a "very bad" state.

Here, as in other weapons sectors, the competition is fierce, and the technological edge enjoyed by American suppliers thanks to Pentagon research credits gives decisive advantages to the United States, where the home market is so big that it permits utilising every possible kind of dumping in export sales, including sales to Europe.

When André Giraud took over as minister of defence, he removed Emile Blanc from his job as general representative for armaments, suggesting that Blanc was too busy trying to rack up export sales and was likely to put the French government out on a limb in commercial deals. Blanc's successor, Henri Conze, has been instructed to allow industrialists to shoulder more of their own commercial responsibilities, as the defence ministry should not be doing their job for them.

(July 23)

Facts about drugs belie the minister's concern

Minister of Justice Albin Chalandon has announced that the former Paris police prefect, Guy Fougier, would be leading an inter-ministerial mission to combat drug addiction. "The drugs scourge has assumed such proportions that it has become necessary to mobilise the whole of society to combat it," said Chalandon. Specialists, on the other hand, say that the rate of drug addiction has been slowing down in France.

By Christian Colombani

IN their own way, politicians also fall victim to the inevitability of drugs — they just cannot help making alarming pronouncements which shift the emphasis in the problem and only mislead public opinion. Are they themselves frightened by what they describe as a scourge, or do they believe they have to scare people to govern? François Mitterrand promised in 1984 that he was going "to get angry". We see the consequences. Now Chalandon steps into the breach. Determined to be very strict, he wants courts to "apply the full weight of the law against small-time pushers who make up the spearhead of the concerted drive by big narcotics dealers . . ." Every time someone gets "mad", the emphasis is shifted to repressive action. The public are reassured, appeals made to the services of the police and the law courts, and things go back to the same old routine. Drug addiction follows its own pace. . . .

Yet in 15 years, the problem has changed. While official pronouncements have remained the same, the appearance of the drug addicts has changed, the products are different, new rings have been forged or added to previously existing ones. With time, the specialists have discovered the complex nature of a moving reality and governments the difficulties posed in trying to counter the problem. We know today that repressive measures, while necessary, must go hand-in-hand with prevention, therapeutic action and efforts to reintroduce cured addicts into society. But most of all we know that we do not know very much about these things.

Experience has shown that by destroying poppy or coca plantations we starve peasants, that by arresting a small pusher we also seize a victim of drug addiction, and that the big operators, in some cases connected with the machinery of governments, have become respectable citizens: their money, laundered, does not smell.

True, combating drugs is not pointless, repression does pay off, taking charge of addicts results in cures, often as not slight improvements, but the work is slow-going, far from spectacular and disheartening. Honest establishments announce a 30 per cent rate of cures. Modest police officers acknowledge they keep drawing plenty of blanks before they succeed in smashing a ring. And most judges are apt to admit that prison is not the answer. It is a slow and difficult struggle therefore, and solutions are unlikely. For, unfortunately, there is no offer without the demand and the need to drug oneself did not arise with the development of heroin.

Must we for all that give in to the obvious and flatter the public? Drugs cause fear, they affect youths — there are practically no addicts over the age of 35 — and the very existence of addicts is felt like a threat to law and order. Is there anyone who remembers the ravages caused by drink problems, road accidents (speed is a drug), and suicides compared with the horrible picture of the addict? This is where the tragedy lies and the words for expressing it. Statistics are there to buttress it.

There are at present 6,000 addicts in French gaols. In 1985, 29,750 arrests were made for violations of drug laws. These statistics need to be clarified. The number of arrests and seizures of drugs stems in part from the fact that police services responsible for combating addiction have been strengthened. The staffs of the Office Central de Répression du Trafic des Stupéfiants (OCRTS) and the Paris drugs and vice squad have doubled in five years.

Can we speak, as the justice minister does, of a "frightening increase in drug abuse"? If we go by statistics alone, we see that on the contrary the rise in addiction has perceptibly slowed down. We cannot understand why Guy Fougier, the new head of the inter-ministerial mission on fighting addiction, tried to show the extent of the "scourge" by comparing only the 1964 and 1984 figures of deaths due to overdoses — one in 1964 and 125 in 1984.

Was the former police prefect aware of the OCRTS report for 1985? In Paris, there were 85 deaths by overdose, that is 38 less than in the previous year. Nationwide, there were 172 deaths through overdoses in 1985 compared with 237 in 1948, that is 65 fewer deaths.

Given that roughly there is one death by overdose for 500 addicts, where did Chalandon get his figure of "100,000 heroin addicts" in France? In order to prove to what an extent "drugs are a destructive scourge of society", Chalandon put forward the argument that half the offenders in the country had committed drug-related violations or crimes.

These figures appear to be considerably exaggerated. An epidemiological study conducted by Dr Rodolphe Ingold shows that there were only between 30 and 40 per cent of addicts at the Fleury Mérogis gaol, where the largest number of drugs offenders are concentrated. But Chalandon did quote from the OCRTS report to emphasise the part played by foreigners in the narcotics trade. The reports says that "61 per cent of the persons arrested (for drugs-related offences) are foreigners." But the fact remains that the number of arrests in 1985 was the lowest recorded in ten years.

Several other observations permit on the other hand to confirm reassuring statistics and diagnose a slight improvement. The number of "clients" taken in by institutions has dropped this year by about ten per cent. There has been no repetition in Paris of the sort of explosive situation that developed in the neighbourhoods of Belleville, Republic and Ilot Chalon. In addition, a certain saturation of the market and a disorganisation of the retail trade can be noted.

These encouraging signs perhaps signal the success of the French "model" (of fighting addiction) promised by Dr Claude Olievenstein, who knows how to hold the balance between liberal acceptance, prevention and repression. "Addicts," he says "have themselves become more obedient and normative. If they take barbiturates and other legal drugs, it is often so as not to fall foul of the law. When they come to us today, they don't want just to kick the habit, they want to get back into society."

Rock stars are not making as many converts as they used to. In North African circles, singers like Karim Kacel are even campaigning against drugs. All so many new attitudes and realities which for the first time in 15 years should give the authorities cause for rejoicing. So why raise the bugaboo of drugs?

(July 20/21)

The Washington Post

Pakistan Halts Transfer Of Stinger Missiles To Afghans

PESHAWAR — Pakistan appears to have suspended the controversial new program to transfer U.S.-supplied Stinger anti-aircraft missiles to Afghan rebels and is also limiting the deployment of a similar weapon the United States is reported to be supplying, the British-built Blowpipe, according to sources in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Pakistan, in a role it took on secretly several years ago but which has since become generally known, is the main pipeline for funnelling weapons to the resistance fighters battling the Soviet occupation of their country.

the electronic heat-seeking system of the Stingers.

The mujaheddin who reported the spring development of Stingers said they had now been withdrawn. One informed Pakistani military analyst, while not confirming the Stinger deployment, said Pakistan — which controls the delivery of U.S.-supplied weapons to the mujaheddin — is now blocking the delivery of Stingers to the Afghans.

The Stinger project "was aborted at some stage of implementation," he said, because "inducting U.S. equipment means escalation. Our (government and military) people

By James Rupert

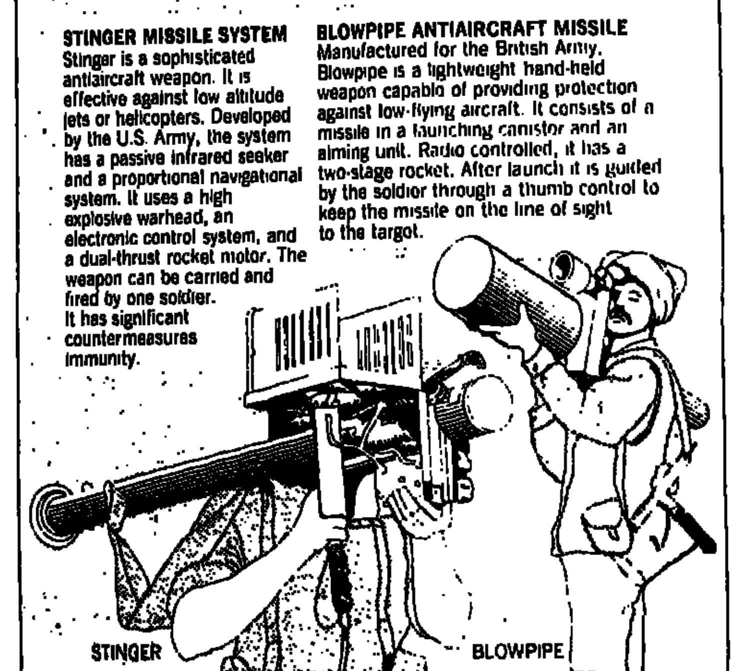
Sources here and in Islamabad, the Pakistani capital, say that the new limitations on the missiles are primarily due to Pakistan's own security concerns, including worries over possible Soviet retaliation. It is not clear, these sources said, whether the suspension of the Stinger deliveries is temporary or permanent.

Aside from security concerns, there are also indications of technical problems with the Stingers. Several sources interviewed here and inside Afghanistan during a recent reporting trip spoke of Stingers having been deployed in defense of Afghan guerrilla bases in Afghanistan at Jawar in April and Jaji in May. The sources said the missiles had repeatedly misfired. A knowledgeable western observer suggested that rough handling and continuous exposure to hot sun might have damaged

are not ready for it. If the Soviets decide on a confrontation with us at some stage . . . we're not sure what the United States will be ready or able to do to guarantee Pakistan's security."

The Reagan administration is pressing Pakistan to allow stepped-up support for the Afghan resistance. But Pakistani officials appear fearful of cooperating, largely because they continue to doubt the United States' commitment and ability to help defend Pakistan in case of a serious threat from the Soviet Union.

In March, the Reagan administration, in a major shift of U.S. policy, decided to send the sophisticated shoulder-held Stingers tc Afghan and Angolan rebels, informed sources said at the time. The shift occurred after activists in the Pentagon and the CIA, backed



SOURCE JANE'S INFANTRY WEAPONS

by conservatives in the Senate and elsewhere, overcame opposition by State Department officials, as well as some officials in the CIA, it was reported.

Opponents of the shift argued that introducing U.S.-made arms into Third World conflicts would escalate those struggles into U.S.-Soviet confrontations and that there were no guarantees that such advanced weaponry would not fall into terrorist hands. But in the interagency deliberations that led to the policy change, those concerns were overcome by the argument that, in Afghanistan's case, the anti-communist forces were in dire need of anti-aircraft missiles to defend against Soviet helicopter gunships and jets.

Although the Blowpipe is British-made, there is no evidence of a direct British role in their transfer or use in Afghanistan. All suggestions from Afghan and Pakistani sources are that the Blowpipe is being supplied by the U.S.-sponsored arms pipeline. Western diplomats in Islamabad suggested that the United States purchased the Blowpipes directly from Britain.

The Pakistani and Afghan sources agreed that the missiles had proved largely ineffective. Pakistani and western military analysts suggested the major problem was inexperienced operators, although several sources said some missiles experienced technical problems.

One westerner described a videotape made by the mujaheddin that appeared to show a Blowpipe being fired and exploding just underneath a Soviet SU-25 ground attack jet. "The mujaheddin have no weapon in their arsenal that will catch a jet and explode near it," the western source said. "But the Blowpipe can be fitted with a proximity fuse, which would be the logical thing if you're giving it to inexperienced people, whose aim is not very good." A western military specialist suggested that, set to explode in proximity to aircraft, the Blowpipes have proved not powerful enough to destroy SU-25s, which are armored on the underside.

Unconfirmed reports from Afghan sources here said the Pakistani military, anxious to prevent the fall of the mujaheddin bases just on the Afghan side of the border, had sent officers into Afghan territory to fire the missiles. Although Pakistan denies any role in aiding the mujaheddin, a western diplomat in Islamabad said Pakistani officers "are known to go inside" Afghanistan.

Botha Accused Of Reneging On Black Citizenship

By Allister Sparks

JOHANNESBURG — The South African government is being accused of failing to honor a pledge to restore citizenship rights to millions of blacks who became aliens when four tribal regions were granted nominal independence under the country's apartheid system of racial segregation.

Official statements during the past week have indicated that South African citizenship will be restored to only about 1.75 million of the estimated 10 million blacks connected to these regions, called "homelands." The rest will be treated as aliens requiring special permits to live and work in South Africa.

Civil rights workers say this effectively means the influx control system, which the government claims to have abolished, will remain in force for millions of blacks and that hundreds of thousands of homeland residents will fail to get permission to work in the industrial cities. To enforce the control, the police will have to stop blacks on the street and demand to see their personal documents, effectively continuing the "pass law" raids that also are supposed to have been abolished.

Opposition sources are now accusing the government of a "massive breach of faith" in its pledges earlier this year to abolish these controls from July 1. The laws themselves have been repealed but, these sources say, the controls will continue in other forms for many blacks.

The scrapping of the pass laws and influx control has been widely acclaimed as one of the most important reforms introduced by the administration of President Botha, who emphasized in a series of signed newspaper advertisements last February that claimed that "a new era of freedom has begun." President Reagan also cited it in his July 22 policy speech on South Africa as evidence that the Botha administration had wrought a "dramatic change" in South Africa. "Citizenship, wrongly stripped away, has been restored to nearly 6 million blacks," Reagan said.

Now, by the government's own estimate, it seems that fewer than one-third of that number will benefit from the restoration. Civil rights workers say between 7 million and 8 million other blacks, including many who commute daily to work in the Johannesburg-Pretoria area from townships that are technically in a homeland, will be worse off than before.

The situation will be further aggravated in December when a fifth homeland, KwaNdebele, just north of here, becomes nominally independent. Hundreds of thousands of workers who commute daily from there into this industrial heartland of South Africa will then also become aliens, requiring work permits to enter the country.

Sheena Duncan, a key figure in the Black Sash civil rights organization, which specializes in the influx control system, points out that by law an alien cannot be granted a work permit unless there is a shortage of South African citizens available in his job category. Because there is massive black unemployment at the moment, rising to nearly 50 percent in some areas, this means few of the homeland aliens will qualify for work permits.

Johan Pretorius, director of migration at the Department of Home Affairs, confirmed at a news conference in Pretoria that the government's priority would be "to protect employment opportunities for its citizens," excluding the homeland aliens.

Duncan also believes that what she calls the "hassle factor" of obtaining work permits and subsequent extensive paperwork involved in employing aliens from the independent homelands will cause employers to avoid them and hire workers with citizenship rights instead. "With all the bureaucracy involved, the homelanders are going to find it much harder to get jobs, and unemployment in those regions is going to soar," Duncan said.

But this will not show up in South Africa's official statistics because the homelands are regarded as foreign countries. Statistically, Duncan points out, government employment reports will reflect an apparent improvement because more citizens will be employed at the expense of the homelanders.

The opposition Progressive Federal Party maintains that the government gave an informal undertaking when the reform bills were being studied by a parliamentary committee earlier this year that workers from the independent homelands would be exempted from the Aliens Act, which requires foreigners to get work permits. "There has been a clear breach of an undertaking given by government officials in the standing committee," said Nic Olivier, the party's chief research officer and a key member of the opposition team in the committee.

But officials say they are doing no more than spelling out the implications of legislation passed by the white-dominated parliament. Duncan agreed. "We have been pointing out all along that too many people were exaggerating what was being done instead of looking at the fine print of the law," she said. This underlines a complaint made frequently by people like Duncan, that in their eagerness to find cause for optimism in the South African situation, many concerned observers, including outsiders like President Reagan, often read more into Pretoria's stated intentions than is justified.

Duncan is careful to give credit for what has been done. The changes to the pass laws and influx control regulations, she said, have meant a "marked improvement" in the circumstances of two-thirds of South Africa's total black population of 28 million.

For the 19 million who do not belong to the tribes that have nominally independent homelands, there is now much greater freedom of movement. These blacks no longer need official permission to work anywhere they like in South Africa, and they are free to go anywhere in the country to look for work, which they were not allowed to do before.

However, they are still restricted by residential segregation laws to living in townships demarcated for blacks only, and they can use only segregated state institutions such as schools and hospitals. They must also have "house permits" showing that they are authorized to live in a particular house in the segregated townships.

But for all except the estimated 1.75 million of the 9 million members of the Xhosa, Tswana and Venda tribes that have independent homelands, life will be more difficult than before, Duncan said.

Under the old system, every black person was required to carry a pass at all times and could be arrested if he or she failed to produce it to a police officer on demand. Pass raids were commonplace, and more than 2,000 blacks were arrested every day. The "passes" certified that the black person was entitled to be in what is officially regarded as white South Africa — the 87 percent of the country reserved for occupation by the white minority of 4.6 million and in which the smaller colored (mixed race) and Asian minorities recently have been granted subordinate political rights.

The 28 million blacks were assigned to 10 small and fragmented tribal homelands, whether they lived there or not. These regions together make up the remaining 13 percent of South Africa's land area and exclude all the industrially developed areas.

Blacks could gain the right of permanent residence in "white" South Africa, where all the jobs are, if they were born there, if they worked there for the same employer for 10 consecutive years or if they worked for different employers for 15 years without a break. Any other black person could be in white South Africa only as a migrant laborer, working on a renewable one-year contract and leaving his family behind in the tribal territory.

The Washington Post

Strategy For Slow Times

IF THE AMERICAN economy keeps growing only slowly (and that seems likely) Congress may have to reconsider its rigid budget strategy. Low growth means that the tax laws won't raise as much money as Congress expected because incomes and profits won't be as high as it had assumed. And that means larger deficits. One response is to keep cutting the other side of the budget, spending, until the deficit is back within the legal limits set by the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act. But that would raise its own dangers.

If the economy is growing slowly to begin with, and the deficit is cut sharply, that would tend to make growth slower than ever. That risks another shortfall of revenues, requiring another round of spending cuts and so forth in a vicious spiral leading to a recession — in which the G-R-H limits would be suspended and deficits would soar.

A better solution might be to suspend the deficit limits and instead target spending alone, holding it flat at its present levels. There would be no further spending cuts for next year, regardless of revenue shortfalls. But there would be no spending increases, now or later, until the deficit was safely back on the G-R-H track.

Things haven't yet come to that point. The economy still invites budget-tightening, preferably through a tax increase. It is essential to get the deficit down, even at the cost of a taste of the austerity that this country has been preaching to its Latin American friends. In this decade, Keynsian economics won't work in its accustomed way. For example: if a budget deficit stimulates economic growth, why is the country's growth rate declining while its gigantic budget deficit grows even larger? The answer is that, utterly unexpectedly to most Americans, the budget deficit has created its own counterforce in the form of an almost equally gigantic trade deficit. One presses toward higher growth, the other presses against it, and at present they nearly offset each other.

That's why the United States can't speed up growth simply by spending more and widening the budget deficit. To increase demand does not necessarily increase production — in this country. The difference between the two is the trade deficit. Similarly, to restrict demand does not necessarily restrict American production — not if the trade deficit is falling. But the way to get the trade deficit down is to get the budget deficit down first.

The United States has got itself into a bad position, and cannot extricate itself easily, or entirely painlessly. It is crucial to avoid a recession and yet the familiar Keynsian preventive, an increase in government spending, is now worse than useless. If the G-R-H budget deficit limits should turn out at some point to be impossible to hit, the alternative is to hold spending flat and let revenues swing with the tides of the economy. The deficit would not come down as swiftly as Congress had hoped, but it would come down more surely.

REAL GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT

PERCENT CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS QUARTER
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED ANNUAL RATE

10% · 9 · 8 · 7 · 6 · 5 · 4 · 3 · 2 · 1 · 0

I II III IV I II III IV I II III IV I II
'83 '84 '85 '86

SOURCE: Commerce Dept.

Up To Europe, Japan

PAUL A. VOLCKER, the chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, has a double message for the people who make the world's economic policy. For the Americans, he offered a warning that they can't afford to resolve their gigantic trade deficit until they bring their federal budget deficit down. The trade deficit generates a flow of foreign lending that the United States needs to finance its dangerously unbalanced budget. Without that foreign lending, interest rates would soar. The flood of imports into this country is damaging American manufacturing industry. But neither the president nor Congress can do anything of significance to help the manufacturers as long as their domestic budget continues to require vast loans.

It's likely that the budget deficit will at least begin to decline next year. With that in mind, Mr. Volcker delivered another kind of warning to "the rest of the industrial world" — essentially Japan and Germany. That enormous American budget deficit has pushed up demand, much of which is being supplied from the rest of the world — that's the trade deficit. Japan and Europe have become highly dependent on their exports to the United States. If demand here drops along with the budget deficit, the only sensible response by the other industrial countries is to speed up their own internal economies to compensate. But so far they have adamantly resisted. If they persist, demand will fall worldwide. Mr. Volcker didn't say it (he didn't have to) but that is the definition of a world recession.

Why do Europe and Japan refuse to respond, in defiance of their own clear interests? Every government is reluctant to acknowledge, before its own voters, that in economic matters it is far from sovereign. Each, including the United States, is heavily dependent on its neighbors and trading partners — a thought that grates on the common idea of independence. The whole delicate subject is usually left to professors and to politicians safely in retirement. Mr. Volcker is one of the few people in high office, in this country or any other, who makes it his business to keep reminding the world of the realities on which everybody's prosperity depends.

He was testifying before Congress, with a large and intent audience listening above all for hints about future interest rates. With the budget tightly locked in by law, monetary policy is about the only part of the economic steering mechanism that is still moveable. But large reductions in interest rates are inadvisable, Mr. Volcker said, because of concerns about inflation and the exchange rate. And, in his view, fiddling with minor changes in interest can't do much for economic growth in this country, much less abroad. To keep the expansion going will take much more forceful action, most of it in capitals other than this one.

Mexican Debt Agreement

THE MEXICAN DEBT agreement is a victory for common sense. It's by no means a final victory, for it represents only one step in the management of Mexico's enormous foreign debt and Mexico's return to economic growth. But things are now moving in the right direction, and that's enormously important to the United States. As a matter of foreign policy, Mexico's stability ranks second only to the Soviet strategic relationship in its significance to Americans in the coming decade.

Under this agreement the lenders will make extraordinary concessions to Mexico, and Mexico will make extraordinary efforts in its own behalf. The agreement, signed by Mexico and the International Monetary Fund with the active support of the World Bank and the Reagan administration, does not merely try to help Mexico carry its present debts. Mexico has to be able to carry them in terms that will permit its economy to expand, and that will permit it to continue to borrow. The drop in the price of oil has made Mexico's borrowing requirements imperative.

Mexico, on its part, has apparently abandoned demands for interest rates below market levels, which would threaten higher interest rates to the banks' other borrowers. Beyond that kind of negotiating concession, Mexico is now moving steadily ahead with the most profound kind of internal reforms. It is closing money-losing state-owned enterprises. It is beginning to dismantle the protectionist practices that preserve highly profitable inefficiency for well-connected businessmen. President Miguel de la Madrid and his government are already paying a substantial political price for these reforms, and Americans should not underestimate the risks that Mr. de la Madrid is running.

It's far from certain that the commercial banks will go along and put up their half of the $12 billion in new loans that the agreement would provide over the next 18 months. But the best bet is that, with the usual grumbling, they will cooperate. Otherwise, if there were a Mexican default, they might well be blamed for it. None of the American banks is likely to expose itself to the consequences of that — not with the U.S. Treasury actively supporting the agreement. If the American banks cooperate, the Japanese and Europeans will follow.

None of that can guarantee success. The present phase of Mexico's distress is wholly down to one unpredictable event, the sudden collapse of oil prices last winter, and no doubt other unpredictable events lie ahead. But the agreement demonstrates that the international system — meaning Mexico, the Reagan administration and the IMF — are capable of dealing skillfully with an international economic crisis of the greatest urgency.

The Old S. Africa Policy

MR. REAGAN got it wrong in his South Africa speech last week. Something new was needed: something to make it clear not only that he feels the great wrong of apartheid but also that he is not letting pride stand in the way of an evolution of policy. Yet for all the strong words he mustered about apartheid, he still does not convey anything like the urgency its victims feel for getting out from under it. He still apparently believes there is time, political space and company to go on with business as usual. This attitude threatens to leave him marooned behind onrushing events in South Africa and here at home.

There is a disconcerting rigidity to Mr. Reagan's thinking. Somehow he has got the sanctions question framed in artificial either/or terms. "We must stay and work," he said, "not cut and run." In fact, if Mr. Reagan were going to fulfill the promise of stay and work, he would have committed the United States to an expanding dialogue with the African National Congress, one of the key groups with which the Pretoria government must negotiate on a basis of full equality. In any event, it pins a false rap on sanctions to identify them with cut and run. Unenforceable, indiscriminate sanctions of the sort the House adopted in a fit of theatrics and distraction may deserve that label, but sanctions like those recommended by the recent British Commonwealth mission belong to a sensible stay-and-work policy. The Commonwealth would cut at the travel, financial options, and psychological ease of whites but exclude controls on the metals of strategic value to the West. It anticipates not the destruction of South Africa's economy but its temporary, though considerable, dislocation.

The Reagan speech unhappily aggravates and advertises divisions in Washington. The silver lining is that it may have the practical effect of drawing the Republican-controlled Senate into a larger role. Moderates such as Richard Lugar and Nancy Kassebaum favor an effort to keep up with fast-moving political currents and to steer them by application of particular sanctions in stages. This is the approach the president might have taken in order to retain control of American policy. He stands increasingly to lose control now.

Reagan Delights Pretoria

By Allister Sparks

PRETORIA — White South Africans reacted with surprise and delight to President Reagan's speech last week rejecting economic sanctions as a way to force an end to the government's policy of apartheid, but black leaders were furious at what they regarded as a major letdown by the West.

The government's satisfaction over the Reagan speech was also heightened by its timing, coming just hours before the arrival of British Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe on a mission from the European Community that is also aimed at trying to avert economic sanctions against Pretoria.

The government's sense of relief was palpable, as officials, who have been increasingly anxious recently under the strain of the continuing racial conflict and foreign condemnation, smiled and joked. Foreign Minister, Pik Botha issued a statement welcoming Reagan's speech and suggesting that it opened the way for South Africa to have talks "at the highest level" with the United States and other countries "regarding the realities of Southern Africa."

This was followed by a chorus of statements from white business leaders lauding the Reagan speech as "a note of realism" and saying U.S. opposition to sanctions would help South Africa develop a stable society. "I think the most important thing about President Reagan's speech is that it has lifted a siege mentality that had taken hold here," said Carl Noffke, a former Washington-based diplomat who is now director of the Institute of American Studies at Johannesburg's Rand Afrikaans University.

Noffke said he believes the administration of President Botha had resigned itself to the inevitability of sanctions and was adopting a "to hell with the world" attitude. The government expected Reagan to announce a tough new policy to replace "constructive engagement," and the sense of relief when he did not has dispelled the siege mentality, Noffke said.

"Now there is a feeling that we have at least two friends in the world (Reagan and Thatcher) who are willing to listen before they introduce any sanctions."

Noffke also said the administration now feels its action in declaring a state of emergency has been justified. It had taken this tough action expecting that it would produce a strong international reaction and probably sanctions, but the attitude adopted by Reagan and Thatcher has shown that the worst was not going to happen. Reagan had "done a great public relations job" for South Africa by stressing the country's importance to the West before an audience of millions. "He did a better job for us than we have ever been able to do for ourselves," the former diplomat said.

Bishop Tutu, however, was not mollified by Reagan's sharp criticism of apartheid during his speech. "I think it's quite disgusting to express ritual abhorrence of apartheid and then to hear all this nonsense that we will be the first ones to suffer from sanctions."

Other black leaders, some of whom are in hiding to avoid detention under the emergency regulations, expressed fears that the government would now feel it was safe from any serious prospect of sanctions and would crack down more severely than ever on black activists.

Averell Harriman, Tireless Champion Of Better Relations

W. AVERELL HARRIMAN, whose service to the nation in peace and war was unique in its breadth and longevity, died on Saturday last week at the age of 94.

For half a century, as the agent of presidents or as elder statesman, Harriman was at the center of efforts to establish practical working relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. He was one of the first to warn of the dangers of Soviet expansion at the end of World War II, and later he was one of the first to champion reduced tension between the two superpowers in order to avert World War III. That brought him under political attack first as a war hawk, then as a naive dove, but his objectives never changed.

In 1963 he negotiated the first major arms control pact between the United States and the Soviet Union, the Limited Test Ban Treaty, prohibiting nuclear weapons tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water.

The offices he held ranged from ambassador to Moscow and London to secretary of commerce, governor of New York, undersecretary of state, and negotiator on wars in Laos and Vietnam. Above all, he was a matchless behind-the-scenes envoy, ready to circle the globe for Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, or any other president who asked him.

When they ceased asking, Harriman went on his own. In June 1983, when he was 91, with sight, hearing and voice all failing, but with his determination undiminished, he made his last mission to Moscow, to meet with Soviet leader Yuri V. Andropov. He

pragmatic power terms the Soviet leadership saw him as a select member of the inner circle controlling the United States, with the influence to deliver what he promised to a far greater degree than any professional diplomat.

Admirers, and critics, tried various labels to describe the Harriman style: "Honest Ave the Hairsplitter" for resourcefully marshaling technicalities to reinforce his arguments; "Available Ave" for his readiness to dash around the world at a president's signal, and above all, "The Crocodile," for striking out unexpectedly to chop off an opponent's muddled argument.

The Harriman willingness to take on lofty or mundane assignments gave him an exceptional mixture of experiences. His major posts were: Chief of the materials branch, Office of Production Management, 1940-41; special representative of the President in London for lend-lease and other wartime agencies, plus special missions to the U.S.S.R., 1941-43; ambassador to the Soviet Union, 1943-46; ambassador to Britain, 1946; secretary of commerce, 1946-48; U.S. ambassador in Europe for the Marshall Plan, 1948-50; special assistant to the president, 1950-51; director, Mutual Security Agency, 1951-52; governor of New York, 1955-58; ambassador-at-large, 1961, and again in 1965-68; assistant secretary of state for Far Eastern affairs, 1961-63; undersecretary of state for political affairs, 1963-65; delegation chief, Vietnam negotiations in Paris, 1968-69; and chairman, foreign policy task force, advisory council, Democratic National Committee, since 1974.

By Murrey Marder

was driven to that journey by apprehension over the great gulf between the men in the Kremlin and the Reagan administration. He outlived Andropov, as he had outlived the Russian's predecessors: Josef Stalin, Nikita S. Khrushchev and Leonid I. Brezhnev. He had bargained with each of them through the high and low points in U.S.-Soviet relations.

In October 1982, at the dedication of the W. Averell Harriman Institute for Advanced Study at Columbia University, which he launched with a $10 million endowment, Harriman deplored "so much misinformation" about the Soviet Union circulating in the United States, "beginning with those in the highest authority of government."

"In looking back over my experience of some 50 years with the Soviet Union," he wrote in 1975 in the foreword to his partial memoirs, "Special Envoy to Churchill and Stalin, 1941-1946," "I find that my basic judgments remain little altered, although conditions have changed radically. I have been attacked for those judgments from both ends of the political spectrum. Some have called me a warmonger; others denounced me as too soft on communism. I continue to maintain, as in 1945, that in ideology there is no prospect of compromise between the Kremlin and ourselves, but that we must find ways to settle as many areas of conflict as possible in order to live together on this small planet without war."

His experience with the Soviet Union went back almost to its beginnings. He missed meeting Lenin, but not Leon Trotsky, whose "coldness" during a four-hour business meeting, Harriman later concluded, "may have been due to his difficult situation at the time" — 1926. Trotsky by then had lost his power struggle with Stalin and was headed for exile and subsequent assassination.

Harriman, then 35, had gone to the Soviet Union to inspect a manganese mining concession in the Caucasus Mountains in which he and other Americans had invested. He left the Soviet Union convinced that Lenin's revolution was "not 'the wave of the future,' " and wrote in 1970: "Nothing has happened since to alter my conviction that the Bolshevik Revolution, for all its manifest achievements, has been on balance a tragic step backward in human development." But, he concluded, "for better or worse the Soviet regime was here to stay."

That early encounter with the Soviet system gave the young Harriman an invaluable cachet for dealing with its leaders in subsequent decades. To them, the patrician Harriman, the scion of one of America's wealthiest industrial families, was the stereotype of capitalism. While that made him the arch-enemy ideologically, in

Two offices held by John Quincy Adams, however, did elude Harriman: secretary of state and the presidency, but not for want of zeal. In 1952, and more determinedly in 1956, Harriman sought the presidential nomination, which both times went to Adlai E. Stevenson.

The Harriman family background suggests why he might have felt driven to prove himself in public service. His father was Edward Henry Harriman, the son of an Episcopal clergyman without wealth, who catapulted into Wall Street as the "Little Giant." When the elder Harriman died in 1909, his holdings included dominant interests in 75,000 miles of railroads, including the Union Pacific, and dozens of corporations.

He yearned for public recognition and instead was listed by Theodore Roosevelt among the "malefactors of great wealth." That malediction may have registered especially on William Averell, one of two sons and three daughters, who was born in New York City on Nov. 15, 1891. Young Harriman, with a share in a $100 million estate, was raised in a baronial environment of summer and winter homes that included a 100-room mansion at Arden, N.Y., serviced by the villages of Arden and Harriman.

He was educated at Groton and Yale. At Yale, where he was a versatile athlete, young Harriman, as varsity crew coach, helped select a freshman crew coach named Dean Acheson, who later outdistanced him as secretary of State. After Yale, Harriman went to work for Union Pacific, soon claiming a vice presidency there and later becoming chairman of the board, as well as executive committee chairman of the Illinois Central Railroad Co.

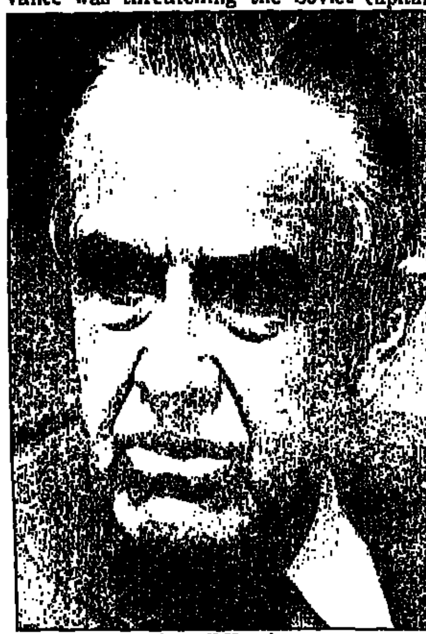
He tried unsuccessfully to duplicate in shipping and aviation his father's success in railroads. In 1920, he organized W.A. Harriman & Co., which later evolved, through a merger, into the banking firm of Brown Brothers, Harriman & Co. Even while helping the New Deal, he was alert to his business interests. In the late 1930s, he developed Sun Valley, Idaho, as a world-class ski resort as a means of expanding his railroad's business. He also was first in the nation to order all-aluminum streamliner trains.

In 1928, he switched his political allegiance to the Democrats' Alfred E. Smith. That shift carried Harriman into a modest supporting role in 1932 for old family friend Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In Washington, in the early FDR days, it was Harry Hopkins, the president's powerful adviser, who became Harriman's patron. In time, Harriman and FDR, with the natural affinity of country squires, and, in the eyes of the wealthiest Republicans, "traitors to their class," established their own trusting relationship.

Hopkins took Harriman out of the Office of Production Management in March 1941, and sent him to London, Moscow and other war fronts as the president's special representative. He attended the Atlantic Charter meeting between Roosevelt and Winston Churchill in 1941, and all but one of the major World War II conferences. He was with Churchill and Stalin in Moscow in 1942; with Roosevelt and Churchill at Casablanca in 1943; with Roosevelt, Churchill and China's Chiang Kai-shek at Cairo in 1943, and the same year with the western *Big Two and Stalin at Teheran; with Stalin,* Churchill and Anthony Eden in Moscow in 1944; at Yalta in 1945, and at Potsdam that year with President Truman, after FDR's death.

After Germany attacked the Soviet Union at the end of June 1941, Hopkins was sent on the first mission by FDR to explore Stalin's military requirements, followed by Britain's Lord Beaverbrook and Harriman, who reached Moscow when the Nazi advance was threatening the Soviet capital.



Averell Harriman

Harriman reported that Stalin bluntly told him in October 1945, as the wartime victory was achieved, that "we've decided to go our own way." After having been one of the most energetic advocates of wartime aid to Russia, Harriman had sounded the alarm in Washington as early as Sept. 9, 1944. He cabled that the Soviet leaders "have misinterpreted our general attitude toward them as an acceptance of their policies and a sign of weakness. . . . There is every indication that unless we take issue with the present policy the Soviet Union will become a world bully wherever their interests are involved."

In March 1948, on his return from Moscow, Harriman was asked if he thought war with Russia was inevitable. "I most certainly do not," he replied, "but it depends primarily on us. There will be no war if we, as a country, remain strong, physically and spiritually." He told the Senate Foreign *Relations Committee that "Russia does not* want war, especially with the United States. However, that doesn't mean that war can be averted" if the Soviet Union overreaches.

His subsequent service as ambassador to London was a brief six months, with President Truman recalling him to replace Henry A. Wallace as secretary of Commerce after Wallace publicly opposed any "get tough with Russia" policy as pandering to "British imperialism." In succeeding years, as Harriman supported the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and became the European director of the Marshall Plan, it was his turn to be denounced by Moscow as a "warmonger" and agent of "American imperialism."

In 1950 and 1951, Harriman was Truman's special advisor on foreign affairs. One of his tasks was to accompany the president to Wake Island to parley with imperious Gen. Douglas MacArthur. When Truman dismissed MacArthur for insubordination, part of the Republican wrath broke over Harriman's head in the resulting Senate inquiry. There were angry charges, which Harriman adamantly denied, that FDR and his subordinates were duped into a "sellout" of vital Western interests at Yalta.

The Yalta furor recurred again in 1955 when Secretary of State John Foster Dulles released the secret record. That record substantiated Harriman's personal firmness, showing that when Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov requested a $6 billion, 30-year loan, Harriman recommended to FDR that it should be tied to the Soviet Union's international behavior.

Harriman's readiness to search for easement of East-West confrontation after Stalin led him to see both opportunities and dangers in the transition to Khrushchev's more venturesome leadership. In 1959, in a brief book entitled "Peace With Russia?" based on talks with Khrushchev in the *Soviet Union, Harriman advocated* "all-out competitive coexistence" with communism.

With the election of President Kennedy, Harriman gained an opportunity to explore his theses, starting with Laos, from his new post of assistant secretary of State for Far Eastern affairs. For 15 months, in 1961 and 1962, Harriman negotiated intensively at a 14-nation conference in Geneva, and in shuttle trips to Southeast Asia, to achieve an agreement on Laotian neutrality. It was never put into effect because North Vietnam never withdrew its forces from Laos. What the United States gained was alignment with Premier Souvanna Phouma as the "neutralist" leader of the country.

Next came an opportunity that followed the flare-up in U.S.-Soviet relations over Berlin in 1961 and the Cuban nuclear missile confrontation of October 1962. This was the major East-West agreement in the post-war era, the U.S.-Soviet nuclear test ban treaty prohibiting above-ground nuclear explosions. Harriman headed the U.S. negotiators in Moscow.

From 1963 to January 20, 1969, when he left office with the Johnson administration, the Vietnam War was the preoccupying, frustrating subject for Harriman. As a senior State Department official, he shared responsibility for clearing a disputed August 1963 cable that is blamed or praised, as the case may be, for helping to encourage the overthrow of South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem in November 1963.

When United States-North Vietnamese peace talks finally did begin in Paris in May 1968, following a partial halt in the bombing of North Vietnam, Harriman led the American delegation. He was determined to negotiate an end to what he regarded as a war long past justification in its costs to the United States.

In secret negotiations, with the Russians operating as intermediaries, Harriman was obliged to bargain with his less conciliatory supporters in Washington, as well as with the unyielding South Vietnamese, plus the North Vietnamese adversaries. When a breakthrough with the North Vietnamese finally was achieved, Saigon balked. South Vietnam succeeded in stretching the formal start of the new talks into the Nixon administration. Said Ambassador Harriman: "We were aghast in Paris."

Harriman carried with him into private life his determined activism. In lectures and speeches and as chairman of the Democratic Policy Committee's International Affairs Committee, he deplored the continuing Indochina war as "a national tragedy." *Inevitably, he came under political* counterattack. The blows were sharp, and also sometimes low. Vice President Spiro T. Agnew charged that "Harriman's penchant for trusting communists has cost some people their freedom and others their lives."

Harriman was in no way deflected by Agnew. Indeed, by 1971 the Washington establishment had become so accustomed to his durability that there was comparatively little surprise when, at the age of 79, he married his third wife, Pamela Digby Churchill Hayward, then 51. (His wife of 40 years, the former Marie Norton Whitney, died in September 1970. An earlier marriage to Kitty Lanier Lawrence, with whom he had two daughters, ended in divorce in 1929.)

Harriman was noted for his driving demands on associates, who found that his energy almost always exceeded theirs, whatever their age. He also could be the gentlest of men. A State Department colleague recalled that once, on a typically grueling Harriman trip, "there we were, flying over the Black Sea and everyone asleep. Then here comes the old man, in his robe, tip-toeing up and down the aisle of the plane putting blankets over everyone like a father taking care of his children." That was the soft underbelly of "The Crocodile."

Conversations With Castro's Captives

By Tad Szulc

AGAINST ALL HOPE. The Prison Memoirs of Armando Valladares. By Armando Valladares. Translated from the Spanish by Andrew Hurley. Knopf. 381pp. $18.95.
TWENTY YEARS AND FORTY DAYS. Life in a Cuban Prison. By Jorge Valls. Americas Watch Committee. 125pp. Paperback, $8.

A GULAG SOUTH exists in Cuba under the socialist revolution launched by Fidel Castro over 27 years ago, and in terms of prison networks for real or alleged "political" offenders, it appears to rank high along with Soviet and South African gulags.

The memoirs by Armando Valladares and Jorge Valls (who were imprisoned for, respectively, 22 and 20 years on vague charges of being "counter-revolutionary" citizens) are frightening and numbing guidebooks to the immense Cuban penal system through which each of them was processed as if from ring to ring in Dante's *Inferno*.

Valladares and Valls, who never met in the course of their endless and parallel transfers from prison



Armando Valladares

to prison, were among tens of thousands of "politicals" serving long sentences during the '60s and '70s. Today, there are probably between 150 and 200 political prisoners left in Cuban penal centers, some of them held for over a quarter-century, but because there is no way of verifying it, the number could be much higher.

The most striking aspect of the Cuban gulag, apart from the extraordinary inhumanity and cruelty described by Valladares and Valls and other released prisoners, is the irrationality, capriciousness and cynicism with which it is operated. In thousands upon thousands of cases, it was never clear why one prisoner was sentenced to 10 years and another to 30 years for allegedly similar offenses (for trying to leave Cuba illegally, for example), why many of them were re-sentenced without being informed of it, and why captured anti-Castro guerrillas sometimes fared better than mere critics of the regime.

The cynicism is reflected in the way in which the regime uses the prisoners for foreign policy and public relations purposes. Again, Valladares and Valls are examples of this practice. Valladares, whose health was shattered in prison by malnutrition, near-starvation, beatings, solitary confinements and psychological torture, was released in 1982, after a personal intervention by Francois Mitterrand, the socialist president of France. This was the culmination of an international campaign on his behalf, following the publication in Europe of poems Valladares had smuggled out of prison. He had been imprisoned for unspecified acts of "public destruction and sabotage" when he was a 23-year-old employee in the Postal Savings Service. He was outspokenly anti-communist, but had no political involvements.

Valls was freed in 1984, also as a result of international pressure; his smuggled poems had won five European prizes. He had fought in the anti-Batista underground, knew Fidel Castro personally as a university student, and, ironically, his imprisonment may have resulted from his court testimony in favor of a former colleague with Communist Party links executed for betraying fellow conspirers to the military dictatorship's secret police.

What the two men had in common, then, was the benefit of foreign pressure on Castro to let them go, an advantage not enjoyed by other hard-core political prisoners who have stayed behind. There are other forms of such cynicism: the release of prisoners to famous foreign visitors to obtain favorable headlines. A group was given to the Rev. Jesse Jackson in 1984; 17 hard-core prisoners were delivered like a going-away gift to the French explorer Jacques Cousteau, who went deep-sea diving with Castro earlier this year; and the last Bay of Pigs invasion prisoner was recently presented to Sen. Edward M. Kennedy.

Reading about the absolute hopelessness surrounding the other prisoners in the Cuban gulag, one can appreciate the luck of the men blessed by foreign attention. But one can also appreciate the luck of Fidel Castro in escaping, when *he* was a political prisoner more than 30 years ago, the sort of treatment that Valladares and Valls endured in the very same cells.

I remember, for example, accompanying Castro last year on a tour of the "model" prison on the Isle of Youth (then the Isle of Pines), including the large cell where he was kept in solitary confinement for many months. Now a shrine, the cell contains the bookcase where Castro had his books, the hot plate on which he told of preparing spaghetti for himself, and a bed with mosquito netting. The Castro regime's prisoners on the Isle of Youth, as Valladares and Valls recount their passage there at different times in the '60s, were overcrowded in small cells (sometimes in "drawers" where a man could only lie), dumped in pools of human excrement, beaten with bayonets, and deprived of the last shred of human dignity.

The incredible disparity between the treatment accorded Castro and his companions, who had set out to overthrow the Batista dictatorship, and that dispensed to Castro's prisoners, whose guilt ranges from the same ambition to change the Cuban government to petty badmouthing of the revolution, raises the fundamental question of standards and legitimacy. Castro takes the view that he had the right to attempt to oust Batista (and most Cubans agreed with him at the time) because the dictatorship was illegitimate, and therefore it was acting illegally in imprisoning the rebels. On the other hand, he insists, the revolution and Marxism-Leninism in Cuba are legitimate because, in effect, he says so (the bulk of the prisoners were under detention *before* the 1976 socialist constitution was approved by a referendum).

Not surprisingly, Castro uses the argument of every regime in power: the regime's existence is in itself the proof of its legitimacy. This would be irrelevant if it were simply a constitutional argument: in Cuba, it is the justification for 25 years of supreme brutality against tens of thousands of human beings — and for hundreds of executions. The Cuban gulag system is a terrible blemish on a revolution that was fought in the name of social justice and political freedom, and it is difficult to comprehend why the Castro government has implanted it on a scale far exceeding the normal needs of any country to defend itself (even from United States invasions). But it was Fidel who once urged "more Robespierres in Cuba".

Of the two books, the Valladares account is more interesting and arresting because of the relentless detail of inhumanity to prisoners it presents. The horror is so great and repetitious as to become almost monotonous as, page after page, Valladares tells the tale of Cuban prisons. It is unfortunate, however, that he, too, misrepresents history in many instances. To cite one, it is not true that Castro's rebels murdered patients in a military hospital at the Moncada barracks in Santiago at the time of their first uprising in 1953. Accuracy does not detract from credibility; inaccuracy damages the broader story.

During my stay in Cuba last year, the subject of the Valladares book came up in many conversations with government officials. Aware of the immense damage in prestige this book had caused Cuba among Western European intellectuals (it evidently did not occur to Havana that Valladares would publish his indictment), these officials sought to portray him as an unstable, morally unsavory and artistically unworthy person to whom no attention should be paid. Twenty-seven years after the revolution, however, the time may have come for the outside world to pay attention to the Cuban gulag system. According to the Americas Watch Committee's statistics, there are still at least 110 hard-core political prisoners in three main Cuban prisons after the releases through June 1986, most of whom have been incarcerated for a quarter-century. Then there are many hundreds more in relatively benign "political rehabilitation programs," kept together with common criminals.

Why?

Tad Szulc, a former foreign correspondent, is the author of "Fidel: A Critical Portrait", to be published this fall.

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Fidel's Infidelity To The Truth

Stephen S. Rosenfeld

EACH YEAR on July 26, Fidel Castro celebrates the anniversary *of the launching of his revolution* in Cuba. This year the festivities can be seen in a different light. The price paid by Cuba's legions of political prisoners, who have made Castro the leading jailer in the world, is finally becoming clear.

The person most responsible for this change is Armando Valladares, whose memoir of his 22 years as Castro's prisoner came out here in May, following publication in Europe. "Against All Hope" is a book and a political event. For Valladares is the Cuban Solzhenitsyn, another writer whose report from a revolution's heart of darkness burst through the haze of propaganda, inattention and stale debate and brought the West's consciousness to a new place.

As happens, "Against All Hope" has provoked reviews extending beyond the book into the political culture. Many ask how the phenomenon of innocents held in bestial prisons could have existed into the third decade of Cuban communism, yet only now does the general political community start to see it truly.

And only now does the mass of *Cubans become concretely* aware of the unjust incarceration and inhuman torture of their fellow citizens, thanks to the 10 programs based on the book broadcast to Cuba earlier this year by the American government's Radio Marti.

The American right, to account for the broader public's ignorance of Cuban prisons, pounces on what it sees as the propensity of American liberals to view Castro through rose-colored glasses — for considerations of sympathy, "peace", guilt, radical chic or whatever.

The left, which is embarrassed but perhaps not as much as it ought to be, cites circumstances. For instance, it is suggested apologetically *that when the American* human rights movement got up steam in the 1970s, its necessary priority was the immediate and gory outrages of right-wing regimes. Others suggest that the few releases of prisoners Castro has recently made, and the current possibility of negotiating the emigration of other Cuban prisoners, finally sensitized our public to the issue.

It is evident that Ronald Reagan has presided over changes in the political atmosphere that have finally made Castro's crimes both fair and necessary game — and not only for Americans concerned with human rights but perhaps increasingly for Latins, whom Castro is otherwise so ready to instruct in anti-Yankee ways. But there is another consideration, one that goes to the peculiar relationship between politics and literature.

I had lunch with Armando Valladares in 1982 a few weeks after Castro released him in response to an appeal by French President Francois Mitterrand. Valladares had written prison poems; the French are good about appealing for poets. *Valladares was thin and gaunt,* a man of sad eyes and halting speech, quiet and rather calm, strangely dispassionate; a victim of a terrible system, but — how unfair it is to say this about him — not a compelling figure or one with what seemed to me a compelling story. I recall thinking he was still sick and tired and in a strange place; translation added another veil. Only his book made plain that here was one of the enduring works of prison literature, the century's distinguishing genre: a record of state violence and individual resistance, authentically told, inspiring, unforgettable. Television may be the medium of contemporary politics, but literature conveys the dimension of individual character. The one creates celebrities, the other heroes, like Armando Valladares.

Some in the West still regard Castro as the fun dictator, bask in the glow of six-hour talks with him, consider him someone we all need to understand better. Valladares seems to me to understand him perfectly, and closes his book with a lie Castro told in 1983, while Valladares was rotting: "From our point of view, we have no human-rights problem — there have been no 'disappeareds' here, there have been no tortures here, there have been no murders here. In 25 years of revolution, in spite of the difficulties and dangers we have passed through, torture has never been committed, a crime has never been committed."

Rough music

By Ralph Whitlock

CONVERSATION with my long-deceased great-grandfather, whom I meet from time to time under the old apple-tree where his cider-press used to stand, was drifting along on the general topic of local scandal. There had been recent items in the papers about mal-treated babies and battered wives. Great-grandfather William, with an ear well-tuned to gossip in his lifetime, needed little prompting to reminisce.

"But we had ways of dealing with that sort of thing in our day," he assured me. "Have you ever heard of skimmetin'?"

I had, the last example in our district having occurred in my father's youth, but that didn't stop great-grandfather from recounting the details.

"'Rough music' we used to call it, too," he remembered. "I mind how we gave Tikey Grudd a taste of rough music.

"Tikey was an ugly little chap with a cast in one eye. Not the sort of feller you'd think would be attractive to women — but there! you never can tell with women! He got Lyddie Scellish in the family way afore she was eighteen, and there they were, living in a little thatched shack at Orchard End, with four little children at the time I'm going to tell 'ee about. Tikey got his living working for one farmer or another, casual-like, doing a bid of trading and a bit more pouching. You know the sort of chap I mean.

"After a bit, the word got round that Tikey was walking over to Vernleigh at nights. You know, taking the short cut through the woods. And he was seeing a girl there — Hannah, daughter of Keziah Flumbank, what kept the Crooked Billet. Like I said, how a squint-eyed good-for-nothing like Tikey Grudd could get even one woman to fall for him, let alone two, is more than I can fathom, but that's how it were.

"Well, it went on for a time and it got to be pretty fragrant" (that was the word great-grandfather used, though not the one he meant) "and we came to the conclusion we had to do summat about it, specially as when he came back from the Crooked Billet late at nights he used to knock Lyddie and the children about. So we decided to skimmet him.

"We fixed a time for one evening and we all collected down at Tikey's cottage. I reckon half the village was there. Billy Turner who beat the big drum in the band, and two or three of the cornet-players, old Mother Vincent with her tongs and tin tray that she beat when taking swarms of bees, chaps with kettles filled with stones, Shepherd Kivell with sheep bells, any number of young chaps with tin cans and bird-scarers and anything that would rattle.

"I took along my double-barrelled gun with blank cartridges, I mind, and there was a lot of women prepared to screech. At a signal we all started up at once, and you never heard such an unearthly rumpus. Rattling, banging, blowing, shouting, and the guns going off from time to time.

"Tikey Grudd, filthy mud!" they yelled. "Come out and face the music."

"I reckon that's where that saying come from . . . 'facing the music'! Rough music, that's what we played for him. And some of the young chaps were banging on the door and throwing mud at it. We could hear the kids crying inside, but Tikey stayed where he was, with the door shut tight. He had more sense than to come out.

"Next week he disappeared, and Hannah Flambank with him. Nobody ever seen him again. I remember we clubbed together and bought his wife a mangle, so's she could earn a bit to help out with parish relief.

"The year after, she was in the family way again. Everybody reckoned they knew who was responsible, and, to tell the truth, there wasn't much doubt about it. 'Twas Elias Cornshaft, up at Hill Farm. Lyddie had been working up there, you see, and he had a bit of a reputation that way.

"Elias was one of the biggest farmers in the village, and as miserable old cuss as ever you come across. So mean he'd skin a turd to save a ha'penny.

"When the news leaked out some of the women and the young chaps were all for skimmeting him, like we did Tikey Grudd. Give him some rough music, they urged, and we all agreed with them . . . up to a point. But when we thought about it a bit more, we could see that wouldn't do. The chances were that he wouldn't take a blind bit of notice of it. But if we made it really hurt, like refusing to have anything to do with the old misery ever, so that he packed up like Tikey had done and went away to elsewhere, then we would hurt ourselves more than we hurt him. For we would never get our money back, you see, for he owed money all round the parish . . ."

I forgot to mention, at the beginning, that this conversation started with my great-grandfather asking me questions as usual about current affairs. He likes to know what is happening in the old world. And I was telling him about South Africa and the current arguments about sanctions. It was rather difficult to explain it all, to a man who had left this world for the next over a hundred years ago, but I did my best. I think he understood all right.

Boyne and Somme

THEATRE by Michael Billington

IRISH plays generally do badly in England. But I hope that Frank McGuinness's fiery, funny, eloquent and moving Observe The Sons Of Ulster Marching Towards The Somme will have audiences flocking to Hampstead Theatre. Written by a Catholic, the play fuses criticism with compassion and Michael Attenborough's production wants little by comparison with Patrick Mason's original which I saw in Belfast last autumn.

What is extraordinary about the play is that it is both a lament for the brave men of the 36th (Ulster) Division who died at the Somme in July, 1916 and an evocation of the death-wish inherent in their culture and history. Seen through the memory of an old survivor from the Protestant Ascendancy, the play charts the course of eight Ulster volunteers from barrack-room initiation to almost certain extinction. Pyper, the central figure, is a guilt-ridden, death-seeking artist sexually drawn to a young Enniskillen boy. The other pairs are a Coleraine baker and miller, a couple of Belfast boyos noisily beating the lambeg drum and a lapsed preacher forced into blaspheming humiliation by a half-Fenian boy.

McGuinness's central point is that the courageous Ulstermen took with them into the trenches their prejudices and antique instincts and that they were more obsessed with the Fenian than the Hun: before going into combat they even replay the Battle of the Boyne with men astride each other's shoulders imitating King Billy and King James. "In the end," says the old Pyper looking back in anger, "we were not led, we led ourselves. . . . We wished ourselves to die and in doing so we let others die to satisfy our blood lust." What happened in the Ulster Division was, in short, both the product of Protestant history and something that left its mark upon the future.

But the miracle of the play is that McGuinness throughout retains his double perspective: sorrow for the men and fear of their history. In the very funny barrack room scene (McGuinness incidentally, is a great admirer of Ayckbourn) he shows the wide-eyed Coleraine baker swallowing the wildest stories about three-legged Fenian women.

But when the men pair off during their home-leave in Ulster he shows them individually becoming aware of the shadow of the death. And in the powerfully moving climax in the trenches he reserves his pity not for the privileged Pyper, reneging on his Carson-ridden background, but for these trusting, foolhardy, unquestioningly brave men singing "Heaven is my home" and exchanging their Orange sashes before going to the slaughter. Less sentimental and class-ridden than Journey's End, this is one of the best plays about the war since The Silver Tassie.

Michael Attenborough's production lacks the blood-red hand of the Ulster flag that dominated the original version. But, with two survivors from the first cast, it is finely acted and there is especially powerful work from John Bowe as the guilt-drenched renegade from the big house, from John Rogan as his angry, red-eyed older self crying "Ulster has grown lonely" from Ciaran Hinds as a bombastic Belfast bully and Reece Dinsdale as an awakened innocent. Dermot Hayes's landscape opens up on to vistas of hell and Ilona Sekacz has come up with a stunning score that evokes both the beating of a Lisburn drum and the insistent sound of gunfire. A second viewing confirms that this is a major play by a writer who understands the poetry of theatre.

Nice vibes Ma'am, says Geldof

By Martin Wainwright

LIKE one of those maddening people who shy all three coconuts off their pegs at a fair, Buckingham Palace notched up yet another triumph of public relations last week.

While workmen uncoiled TV cables on the palace roof from the royal wedding, Mr Bob Geldof emerged in the courtyard below to credit the building, and its occupants, with "nice vibes."

Given the man's following, the accolade was probably worth a great deal more to the palace than the badge and pink ribbon of an honorary knighthood which Mr Geldof got in return. Still, he was delighted and so were his father, also Bob, and his wife Paula Yates, who came along to the investiture with him.

"It's the nicest kind of knighthood because it's so shared and I take it in that spirit," he said, announcing that he would hold a big party to celebrate the honour. "Everyone who comes can maul my insignia and look at it, but I am going to keep it."

Mr Geldof, who was also honoured this week with Tanzania's highest title of "Elder," confounded those sceptical of his ability to look neat by receving his knighthood in a £1,000 bespoke morning suit. He was given it by the royal tailors, Gieves and Hawkes, and the effect was approved of by the Queen.

"You look very nice," she said, before handing the Irish former lead singer of the Boomtown Rats his insignia (dubbing with a sword is reserved for British knights). "This is a small token for all the work you have done."

"Believe me, it was harder work getting into this suit," replied Mr Geldof.

"Yes, I expect it was," said the Queen, "but you do look very nice."

The mastermind of Band Aid and Live Aid, which have raised such enormous sums for the starving of Africa, chatted to his fellow honorary knight, Mr John Paul Getty II — who received his award at the same investiture — and agreed to have tea with him soon.

Mr Getty, the American oil millionaire, and philanthropist, was knighted for his services to the arts, including a £50 million donation to the National Gallery.

Mr Getty is notoriously reclusive but commented briefly after the ceremony: "I love this country and getting this honour from the Queen is part of it all. It makes me feel that I am part of things here. I have no intention of leaving Britain. I am deeply moved."

Bolshoi bravura

By Mary Clarke at Covent Garden

OF the four evening-long works which the Bolshoi Ballet is dancing at Covent Garden this season only one, Raymonda, is not by the company's director and principal choreographer, Yuri Grigorivich. But it is his revised version of the old Petipa ballet, contains additional choreography by him and speaks, very clearly, of his view of how his company should stage and dance the classic repertory.

He puts his trust almost entirely in the dancing. Conventional, traditional mime is absent from most of his productions, and story and emotions are conveyed through the dancers' bodies, trained not only to perform the most difficult technical feats with apparent ease but also to be expressive. Compared with the sumptuous stagings and explicit mime that we expect in Western re-creations of the 19th century classics, this Bolshoi Raymonda may seem a little austere. But if it lacks finery, it contains grandeur — grandeur of gesture, of dancing, and of performance.

The story of Raymonda, set in medieval Hungary, concerns the beautiful Raymonda, betrothed to the knight Jean de Brienne who is off to the wars, lusted after by a wicked Saracen and saved in the nick of time by the returning Jean, accompanied by King Andrew II of Hungary no less.

It serves as a framework, however, to contain one of the great ballerina roles of history and in Lyudmila Semenyaka the Bolshoi have an artist of rare quality. She is tiny, beautifully proportioned, delicate in appearance yet with a technique of exquisite precision that moulds Kirov training with Bolshoi bravura to present an image of the ideal Soviet ballerina.

Dancing in support, in a dazzling cast, were Alla Mikhalchenko, Maria Bylova, Tatiana Golikova, Nina Ananiashvila, and Nina Semizorova (who all take ballerina roles) as outstanding soloists; the supremely elegant Andris Liepa as one of the troubadours; and Elena Radchenko and Sergei Radchenko leading the Hungarian Dance in the third act with tremendous panache and authority. It was quite an evening.

Chicago's crouchback

Nancy Banks-Smith on the Welshman who became public enemy number one

MURRAY the Hump. It's a name to make you walk a little faster in the dark, suggesting Richard III, something crooked, something crouched. In fact, it was only a nickname for Murray Humphreys but the hairs on the back of your neck got it right first time. He was the big shark in Chicago, Capone's successor, the legal and financial adviser to all the Mafia, the son of poor Welsh immigrants who rose to be public enemy number one on merit. If that's the word I'm looking for.

The really remarkable thing about There Was A Crooked Man . . . (HTV) was that no-one could be found to say a hard word about him. He evidently died without an enemy in the world having, presumably, shot the lot.

William Roemer, a former FBI agent, agreed that Humphreys had his little ways "He was a murderer, an extortionist, an intimidator, a bomber, an acid thrower, but . . ." (what do you *mean* "but") "but I learned a grudging respect for that man. He was charming, articulate, distinguished looking and, when he died, it was like a friend of the family had passed away. I didn't sleep hardly at all that night."

"He never swore in front of a woman" as his daughter Louella said. Louella was a considerable coup, coaxed into cooperating by the Welsh connection; the producer, Huw Davies, is a cousin of Humphreys. "Blood will out" as John Morgan rather unfortunately phrased it. She provided a home movie of Christmas in the crooked house, giving a startlingly over-the-top performance as a ringleted moppet. Murray the Hump was persuading her to say her prayers. It's a real shame there is no footage of her being sung to sleep by Chicago gangsters. "They would sing me lullabies." "In Italian?" asked Morgan delicately.

The thoroughly disturbing thing about Humphreys was his job as Chief of Corruption. According to Roemer he bought "public officials, members of the judiciary, law enforcement officers, labour leaders." And politicians. "Father didn't have a great respect for politicians," said Louella, "because he knew he could control them."

Capone went mad in Alcatraz. Humphreys, who had a wicked sense of humour, made another of his home movies of Alcatraz with a cheery soundtrack. "The gang's all here." Not him though. He died at home from, as Chicago columnist Mike Royko put it, "unnatural causes, a heart attack." It was a piece that proved Humphreys had one enemy left alive. Ruminating on Humphreys's work as talent scout for crime, Royko wrote: "Some people thought he would rap a prospect over the head and, if he heard a bongo drum sound, he knew he had a recruit. There is another theory that his system was no more complicated than turning over a rock and seeing what crawled out."

Face of the Sixties

By Waldemar Januszczak

Andy Warhol . . . "I never think that people die."

EARLY on in that lurid yellow Picador paperback which contains the Philosophy of Andy Warhol ("Acute. Accurate. Amazing candour" — Truman Capote), our hero stares at himself in the mirror and worries in case he isn't there.

"I'm sure I'm going to look in the mirror and see nothing. People are always calling me a mirror and if a mirror looks into a mirror, what is there to see?"

Andy Warhol was in London for the opening of a show of self-portraits. The mirror has been looking into the mirror and the walls of the Anthony d'Offay Gallery are lined with the results.

White hair exploding around his head, cheeks sunken Slavicly, Andy Warhol, famous Pop Artist of Czech descent, stares out at his audience through unblinking eyes. The face comes in different sizes. But the underlying likeness remains frozen, its mouth a tight line, its stare unshakeable. Andy, you feel, knows something about you that you yourself don't know.

There is a story by P. G. Wodehouse called The Smile That Wins. It features a young wastrel with a remarkable grimace, half smile, half accusation. Every time our hero innocently smiles that knowing smile whoever he is smiling at panics. Feeling that the smiler knows their guilty secret, the smilees press gifts and favours upon him to bribe his silence. The innocent wastrel grows ever richer without ever knowing why.

Andy Warhol does not smile but he looks. For 25 years since he emerged, blinking, into the lurid world of Sixties Pop Art with his Campbell's Soup can and pictures of Brillo pads, writers have been scouring their thesauruses looking for new ways in which to describe that look, that famous blankness, that unmistakeable facelessness of Warhol.

He has been called The Pope of Pop and the most enigmatic artist of all. Others have commented upon the chalky, puckish mask; the childlike, gum-chewing naivete; the self-admiring carelessness; the perfected otherness; the basically passive astonishment; the enthralling secret knowledge; the Albino-chalk skin, parchmentlike, reptilian, almost blue.

Not enough have commented upon that brittle vulnerability which is the most tangible characteristic of Andy Warhol when you meet him in the flesh. Beneath the eye-catching white wig and slick black gallery-wear is one of those terrifyingly slight human beings who seems to be made of crystal. You dare not shake his hand too vigorously in case it comes off in your fingers.

Is Andy Warhol a vacuum? Or is he, as I suspect, a complex, lonely, problematic man who has constructed for his defence this featureless wall which reflects back whatever anybody throws at it. It bends wherever anybody wants it to bend, resists nothing and therefore cannot be touched.

Warhol is now 58. Photographs show that even as a young man he had an old man's fragile body. He talks softly and kindly, enjoys telling anecdotes, and looks nervously into the distance as he delivers one of his delightful quips because, like an actor, he knows he is trusting in your response.

"I never think that people die," he ruminates about his friend Josef Beuys whose portraits surround us in the back room of the Anthony d'Offay Gallery, portraits churned out by Warhol's Factory. "They just go to department stores."

According to Warhol the Sixties were cluttered. The Seventies were empty. What, therefore, are the Eighties?

"They're getting more exciting. So much like the Sixties it's unbelievable." In the Sixties he says there was a new gallery opening every week. Now there is a new one every day.

So what are we supposed to do with all this art that is being produced? Collect it, he replied. "People start by buying one thing. Then they buy everything. It's like buying magazines. You read about things that the other magazines didn't write about in that category."

In 1968, the day before the assassination of Bobby Kennedy, Andy Warhol was shot by a woman who wandered into his office and blazed away with an automatic. Questioned later the woman, a part-time writer, admitted that her motive was revenge. "Interviewing Warhol," she said, "was like interviewing a chair."

"Before I was shot, I always thought that I was more half-there than all-there. I always suspected that I was watching TV instead of living life . . . The movies make emotions look so strong and real, whereas when things really do happen to you, it's like watching television — you don't feel anything."

Does the world still seem like a completely unreal place, Andy? "You know we were just at the Statue of Liberty celebrations. The sun was out. It was a perfect day. The 4th of July. We were in a boat with millions of other people and it felt like we were in a TV movie. Not even a real movie, but a TV movie."

As old Gluck would have it

CLASSICAL RECORDS by Edward Greenfield

GLUCK: Iphigenie en Tauride. Gardiner/Lyon Opera Orchestra/Monteverdi Choir/Montague/Allen/Aler/Massis. Philips 416 148-2 (two CDs).
PAISIELLO: Il barbiere di Siviglia. Fischer/Hungarian State Orchestra/Laki/Gluyas/Gati/Gregor. Hungaroton HCD 12525-26-2 (two CDs).
GOLDMARK: The Queen of Sheba. Fischer/Hungarian State Opera Chorus and Orchestra/Takacs/Jerusalem/Kincses. Hungaroton HCD 12179-81-2 (three CDs).
JANACEK: The Cunning Little Vixen. Mackerras/Vienna Philharmonic/Popp/Randova/Jedlicka. Decca 417 129-2 (two CDs).

IT IS a strange paradox that the operas of Gluck, which for Berlioz, Wagner and others represented such a revolutionary breakthrough, have so often in modern performances (both in the opera-house and on record) seemed bland to the point of boredom. Though other recordings have pointed the way — not least HMV's vibrant account of Armide based on a Spitalfields Festival performance — no previous issue has for me brought home so vividly the surprising, revolutionary side of Gluck as the new Philips set of Iphigenie en Tauride conducted by John Eliot Gardiner.

It is true there have been two previous complete recordings, but both have been seriously flawed vocally, stylistically and technically. Now for the first time, with Gardiner electrifying in his direction, you can positively feel what excited Berlioz and Wagner, not to mention Gluck's bewildered contemporaries.

Here in this late masterpiece Gluck pushed his theories to their limit, achieving a new fluidity by breaking down formal structures, replacing conventional recitative by a style of arioso that relates directly to his melodies for arias, which themselves in brevity fit in flexibly.

Gardiner — who has had long experience conducting this work in the opera-house, having made his Covent Garden debut with it in 1973 — keeps the drama on the boil from first to last. The start, as he directs it with the Lyon Opera Orchestra and his own Monteverdi Choir, brings immediate reminders of the violent opening of Verdi's Otello with storm music introducing a powerful choral ensemble.

In his choice of singer for the title role Gardiner has gone for purity rather than power, the sweet-toned mezzo, Diana Montague, who sings exquisitely, giving a yearning beauty to her big Act 2 aria, O malheureuse Iphigenie. It is a moving performance, but even more, dramatic is the Oreste of Thomas Allen, violently incisive in his fury aria when he enters in Act 2 and then in gentler music moulding phrase and tone (with perfect diction) to bring out the equivocal emotions of the character.

The American tenor John Aler (who sang in Paris opposite Jessye Norman in the HMV set of La belle Hellen) is just as stylish singing the very different role of Pylade while Rene Massis is clear and precise in the baritone role of Thoas. Some of Gluck's most affecting ideas involve the chorus of Priestesses and here the eight chosen members of the Monteverdi Choir intensify even their briefest contributions. The orchestra of the Lyon Opera House produces fresh, lightly articulated string tone without the abrasiveness of period style, and the recorded sound is outstanding. The four acts fit neatly on to two generously filled discs.

In 1782 in St Petersburg, only three years after the Paris premiere of Iphigenie, came the first performance of a comic opera, which just as clearly pointed to the future. Paisiello's Il barbiere di Siviglia is based on Beaumarchais, and anyone who has ever seen a production will know how far dramatically it falls short of Rossini's later masterpiece; but its sequence of brief numbers, as many duets and trios as arias, makes an agreeable entertainment on record, when the diffuseness of the four-act scheme is less obtrusive.

Hungaroton, ever adventurous in recording opera, has issued a complete recording on two CDs, again generously filled with acts fitting neatly. Adam Fischer conducts the Hungarian State Orchestra in a lively performance featuring some of Hungary's finest singers, headed by Denes Gulyas as the Count and Istvan Gati as Figaro.

Hungaroton has also issued a CD version of Goldmark's grand romantic opera, The Queen of Sheba, fitting it on to three discs instead of four LPs. In this ambitious, exotic piece, echoes of Mendelssohn and Meyerbeer mingle happily with the occasional hint of Wagner (as in the Act 2 duet between the Queen and the infatuated Assad, clearly echoing Tristan).

Joining the regular principals of the Hungarian State Opera, Siegried Jerusalem is magnificent as Assad. Klara Takacs as the Queen and Veronika Kincses as the innocent Sulamit are well contrasted, both singing sweetly except under pressure, and Sandor Solyom-Nagy is an impressive Solomon.

All credit to Decca for preserving intact in its CD set of Janacek's Cunning Little Vixen, John Tyrell's brilliant essay on the sources of the opera together with the newspaper cartoons that inspired it. This is one of the very finest of Sir Charles Mackerras's series of Janacek opera recordings with the Vienna Philharmonic.

Bruisers of the Revolution

Michael Billington welcomes the RSC's new production of The Danton Affair at London's Barbican Theatre.

FIRST comes the movie, then the RSC production. Like Mephisto, which joins the Barbican repertoire, Pam Gems's The Danton Affair both echoes and radically departs from a recent film, Andrzej Wajda's Danton, which also took as its source an unwieldy 1920s Polish stage chronicle by Stanislawa Przypyszewska. I much prefer the play to the film.

Like the Wajda film (and Buchner's Danton's Death), the play focuses on the arrest and execution of the Dantonists in March 1794. The crucial difference is that the Wajda film treated Danton as its hero and Robespierre as a cringing psychopath who soaked his bed with sweat: the Right in France adored the film while President Mitterrand sat through it with "glacial courtesy". Pam Gems has clearly gone back to the Polish source and elevated Robespierre into a tortured idealist aware the Revolution is doomed and treated Danton as a noisy, venal lout with the political sensitivity of an elephant.

The dramatic weakness is obvious: it is hard to get much dialectic going in the confrontation of a tragic, revolutionary hero with a character variously described as "a fat turbot" and "a mediocre lawyer thrown up by events". The Polish authoress's hatred of Danton ignores the basic Shavian rule of political drama which is that you give the best arguments to the least sympathetic character.

For a work that sees Robespierre as the first Communist, the play also takes a curiously old-fashioned view of history similar to Carlyle's work on the French Revolution: events are dictated by individual genius rather that by impersonal forces or the people. This is history as a contest of character.

Yet, for all its faults, the play kept me interested. One reason is that it offers a heavyweight bout for two fine actors (Ian McDiarmid and Brian Cox). The other is that Pam Gems's Robespierre emerges as a figure of considerable complexity. He argues passionately in the Committee of Public Safety against the arrest of Danton; yet in the confrontation of the two men at the Cafe de Foy he is clearly pricked and stirred by Danton's accusation that they are both seeking personal dictatorship.

We get beyond the cliché figure of "the sea-green incorruptible" to discover a man who trumpets liberty and freedom to the Convention but who also intercepts the list of witnesses the Dantonists demand for their trial. It is Robespierre's realisation that he is an idealist hungry for absolute power that gives the play its theatrical bite.

It is also the central thread in Ian McDiarmid's engrossing performance: one that confirms his status as one of the best actors in Britain. His walk is a cautious tiptoe over breaking ice. His body shudders and contracts when he is touched. His voice becomes, in Robespierre's own expressive phrase, a drawling contralto.

Yet, for me, the crux of his performance comes when he realises the Dantonists have overplayed their hand by inciting insurrection during their trial. His jaw judders and shakes in a moment of tactical triumph; yet the light goes out of his eyes as he realises that Danton's death will be the end of the revolutionary ideal. In Robespierre's own words, "To rule by terror, is to admit we have lost." And the final image of Mr McDiarmid is of death-mask, waxwork stillness awaiting the inevitable end.

Brian Cox had a harder task in that Danton is here a corrupt hedonist lacking complexity. Mr Cox's own talent (as Rat in the Skull showed) is also for emotion that ticks away like a time bomb under the surface. Yet although his Danton has no scope for the leonine heroism Mr Cox once displayed in Buchner's far better play, it is a true-to-the-text portrayal of a vain power seeker with an armourplated belief in his own invulnerability: it also has one exciting moment in the defiant exhalation of breath he casts on the people like Coriolanus quitting Rome.

Many of the supporting roles are little more than animated ciphers, but Julian Curry offers a thinking vignette of the philosophical Philippeaux and Tom Mannion makes a suitably noisy Camille Desmoulins though I wouldn't rush to buy a pamphlet from him. Ron Daniels's production also marshalled the proceedings with impeccable logic (I question, however, the use of a single spotlight on Robespierre during the revolutionary address) and Farrah's set with its copper mirrors and decaying skylight roof based on the Tuileries Palace has a melancholy grandeur that encapsulates the mood of this blighted epic.

Why the West will remain wealthy

By Asa Briggs

POWERS AND LIBERTIES, by John A. Hall (Pelican, £4.95). HOW THE WEST GREW RICH, by Nathan Rosenberg & L. E. Birdzell (I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., £16.50).

THERE have always been historians more interested in the broad sweep of history than in its specific detail. Of these two current examples of their work, each concerned with "the rise of the West," John Hall's British product is far more interesting and provocative than the somewhat disappointing American study by Nathan Rosenberg and L. E. Birdzell.

The latter offer a neatly organised, but unoriginal version of economic and technological history, based on familiar and not always the most up-to-date books by other people. At best it is a useful treatise, more useful for its later chapters than for its earlier ones. By contrast, John Hall claims to be writing "philosophical history," the kind of history which was produced not in the nineteenth century but in the eighteenth, and he calls his book an essay. It raises issues rather than balances them, and there is an agreeable touch of daring in it.

Treatise and essay converge, however, at many points, and at more than one point similar language is used. There are 18 references to Adam Smith in the Rosenberg and Birdzell index, 26 in Hall's. Their plenitude points to the fact that both books are concerned essentially with "the wealth of nations," with how in the words of the Rosenberg and Birdzell blurb "the timeless cycle of hunger and hardship" was broken.

There is little hint in either of them that many previous historians with equally broad sweep were more fascinated by the "decline of the West" than by its "rise." Spengler and Toynbee have already passed into forgotten history. "There is no reason to believe that Western growth in scientific knowledge nor the economic growth derived from it is anywhere near the point of exhaustion," Rosenberg and Birdzell conclude. "We see nothing in the underlying sources of Western economic growth to foreclose the prospect of continued growth." "If we remain flexible, avoid 'errors in police,' to use Adam Smith's expression," John Hall says on his last page, "there is no reason why we should face economic decline."

There is one reference to unemployment in Rosenberg and Birdzell — and it is to "the unemployed in pre-industrial Europe": there are none in Hall's index. Both books are uninterested in views from below. Hall refers in his early pages to "the commanding heights of our conceptual apparatus."

Both books insist at many points on the inability of economic historians to explain economic growth entirely in terms of economics. "One of the principal contentions of this book," Hall writes, "is that factors other than economic ones played a role in the rise of the West." "The West's path to wealth," write Rosenberg and Birdzell, "involved and required a society willing to tolerate and accept social and political change far more drastic than any previous revolution."

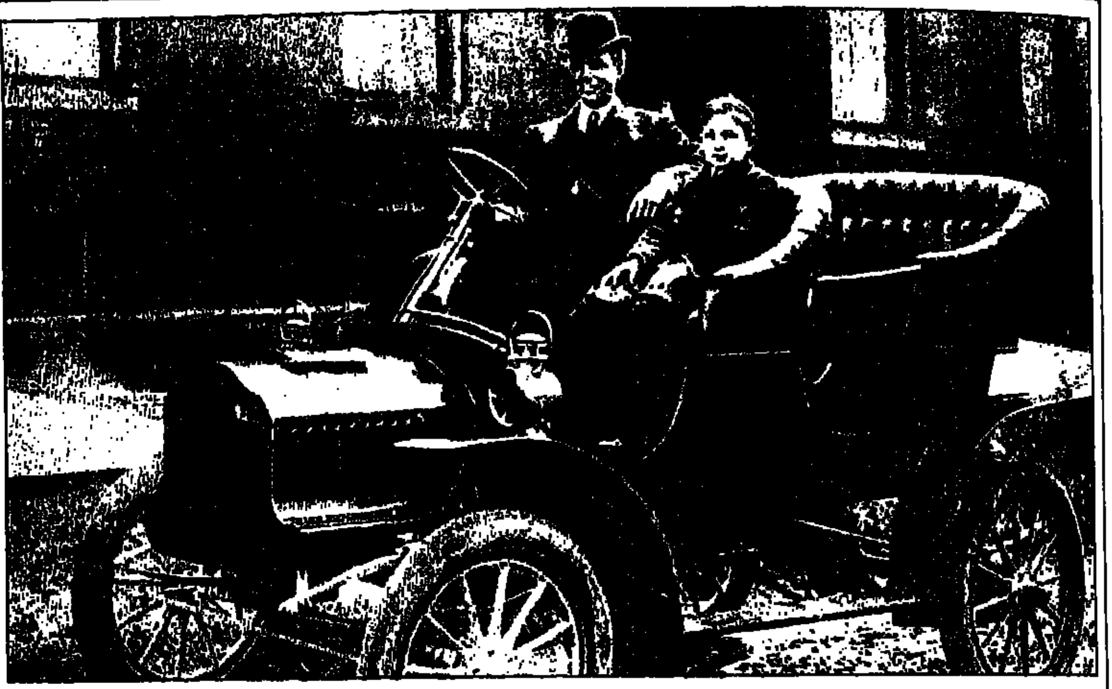
Hall is more specific about the other "factors" and more willing to argue with Marx. Rosenberg and Birdzell, however, are more careful to introduce "cautions." In their last pages they point to the difficulties of comparing contemporary modes and systems of economic organisation in terms either of results or goods, and while they do not point to any of the set of rather different difficulties identifying just what is meant by "the West," they quote Evsey Domar's apparently modest suggestion that it is more relevant to compare East Germany with West Germany, Czechoslovakia with Austria and Yugoslavia with Greece than "East" with "West."

The dangers of exchanging historical detail for historical sweep are apparent in both books. Sweep exhilarates: detail reveals. Moreover, since historians rely on other books as well as on direct research, if the other books are themselves general, both economic and philosophical historians can get further and further away from actual human experience.

They can also get further and further away from their own thinking. The brief sections on the steam engine, for example, in the Rosenberg and Birdzell volume are particularly disappointing, given Professor Rosenberg's highly illuminating earlier writings.

Indeed, the sweep itself lacks exhileration. There is no discussion, for example, or crucial differences between "the gospel of steam," which inspired many disciples of economic growth while alarming many people displaced by it, and the science of nuclear power which has profoundly depended on "experts" and which has disturbed late-twentieth century thinking and feeling. Moreover, the pros and cons of the limits to growth controversy are as forgotten as Spengler and Toynbee.

There is a curious final twist to Dr Hall's very genuine sense of exhilaration. "The rise of the West," he concludes, "pioneered human progress in the strongest sense, by combining commerce and liberty in a wholly miraculous manner." The phrase "wholly miraculous" seems odd from the pen of an enlightenment historian, anxious at the same time to explore "classic questions of historical sociology."



Henry Ford and son Edsel in a Model F in 1904

The feudal Ford fiefdom

By Clancy Sigal

FORD, by Robert Lacey (Heinemann, £15).

HENRY FORD creator of the largest family-controlled business and the fourth largest industrial corporation in the world, was the least heroic of hero inventors. In fact, he was less an original inventor than a sly, greedy organising genius of finance and production who had one really good idea — a light-weight, fast, reliable car at low price for the masses.

Almost all his early competitors aimed for a high profit, middle class market. But as Robert Lacey points out in his curiously distanced blockbuster, Old Henry was a genuine farm boy mentally ruled by the "demonology of rural Michigan" — he hated eastern bankers, moneylenders and Jews. His prejudiced populism almost demanded that he design a people's car that his rivals ("those Grosse Pointe sonofabitches") weren't interested in. So he put together a "twentieth century equivalant of the covered wagon" and called it a Model T. It was a sensation. By the end of the first world war almost half the cars on earth were Model T's.

The later Ford dynasty, made of weaker stuff in a more complex capitalism, always had trouble fulfilling the old patriarch's fanatic wish that the company never fall into the hands of outsiders. The son, Edsel, was driven to an early grave — says Lacey — by a father who installed him as president but refused to let him rule. The present success of the company is due, Lacey implies, to a kind of revenge by Edsel's playboy son Henry II in tribute to his father so cruelly used by old Henry.

This shaky psychoanalysis is less persuasive than other facets of Lacey's formidable research. The saga of Harry Bennett almost demands its own book. As old Henry was fading into nostalgic senility, but faint hearted Edsel was still alive, Ford somehow found Bennett — a shrewd, violent street thug — in the mob and crowned him protége and his son in all but name. Once in full charge Bennett tightened his benefactor's stern paternalism into a rampant anti-union reign of terror. His "empire of darkness" involved bringing in both underworld characters like himself and the FBI to run the Ford factories like prisons. It was a near run thing, according to Lacey, whether or not on old Henry's death the crime syndicate might not take over the company altogether.

The blurred hero of the second, duller half of Lacey's almost 800 page book is Henry II. Though a drunk with a rich boy's insensitivity to workers, somehow he cleaned out the corruption, substituting for his grandfather's grim stopwatch-and-fist regime a smoother, less confrontational system called "human engineering" a PR man's dream of profits without strikes. The whole Ford story is told by Lacey with a nod, but only just, to the assembly line workers who really built Ford. Any author who sees the old time speed-up as a "mechanical ballet" lacks, like his ambiguous idol Henry II, a certain affinity with shopfloor people.

This limits Lacey's views almost entirely to the top corporate infighting that took place once Ford went public (but with the family shrewdly controlling 40 per cent of the voting stock).

To be fair, Lacey's research net is cast so wide that he catches some interesting fish in it. He almost says that the powerful phalanx of Ford woman — starting with old Henry's widow Clara — made the really crucial decisions when the men couldn't. And Lacey is particularly vivid on old Henry's bizarre view of his factory as a mixture of church and YMCA — to work for Ford, the owner felt, was a religious experience and anyone who didn't feel that way was treated (and often beaten) like a heretic.

Lacey's problem is that he is so caught up in boardroom intrigues, especially betwen Henry II and the ego-mad Lee Iacocca, that the broader picture gently fades out of focus. Lacey is also hamstrung by his contradictory desire to flatter the Fords ("shining examples of the best that inherited wealth can produce") and be faithful to their less attractive family traits. I was left not so much with a deeper understanding of the auto business as a stunning final image. Henry II at 70 bent feverishly over his paper shredder feeding into it all the personal and company secrets anyone but a Ford shouldn't see. When all is said and done, the Fords still run their industrial fiefdoms personally and feudally.

Cross Channel cross currents

By Tim Radford

THE ENGLISH CHANNEL, by Nigel Calder (Chatto, £12,95). THE CHANNEL: DIVIDING LINK BETWEEN BRITAIN AND FRANCE, by Shirley Harrison (Collins, £9.95).

IT IS the busiest sea lane in the world; its ever widening waters flow over a hundred buried villages and a hundred thousand victims and what were once the harbours of a Cinque port or two; it has its own petrified forest, its own marsh with its own malarial mosquito.

Its story unfolds like some majestic biblical tale, beginning with a Niagara of a flood which scoured away the soil round the bones of dinosaurs, and it closes with a presumptuous plan to sap through its foundations to link two nations. In between, the tapestry of its tale shows little scenes, vignettes or even charades which seem to crystallise the whole history of the West.

Nigel Calder has his own clear reasons for calling it the English Channel, and he makes his case deftly and without chauvinism. With 14 admirable books behind him, on physics, the weather, weaponry, astronomy and geology, he has already established himself as a great English Channel of communication: this might be his finest book.

It flows like the tide, inexorably, but with swirls and counter currents and eddies which carry anecdotes of Voltaire and Smollet, Drake and the Armada, Admiral Byng and William the Bastard, of Erskine Childers the writer and gun-runner, of wreckers and lifeboatmen, smugglers and surveyors,

He tells it from the cabin and the cockpit of his ketch, as he sails "cruising at an altitutde of sixty metres over the continental shelf of Europe" from Ushant, to Brest, to Roscoff and Rance, the Channel Islands, and Cap Gris Nez before turning and sailing back down the English coast from South Goodwin to Scilly, gathering strands of stories and spinning them first into yarns and then into ropes, and then into a cable that holds the whole world of the Channel together.

Meet here the Spanish ladies that you farewell in song, the earthquake recorded in Romeo and Juliet, the oil from the Amoco Cadiz disaster that lies like a geological stratum beneath the sands of Brittany, and the private agony of sea sickness, the disease whose patron saint is Saint Elmo, "martyred 16 centuries ago by having his intestines taken out on a windlass."

This last topic provides a prime example of the Calder technique: we learn not only the clinical basis for seasickness and how to combat it; we also learn that in medieval law contracts made at sea had no validity because the retching victim "might agree to anything that would shorten the voyage." With every instruction comes a bonus.

It is bad luck on Shirley Harrison that her study appears almost simultaneously. She tells the story not from the point of view of a sailor but of a shore-based camper; the perspective is different. She also handles the history sequentially and is much more detailed, beginning about 195 million years ago and ending with a postscript on the fixed link to come. The book is handsomely richly illustrated; the text is nourishing fare (her historic recipe for seasickness, by the way, is a lump of sugar soaked in creosote).

Bridge

By Rixi Markus©





THE American Contract Bridge League is fortunate in that all its "nationals," its regular competitions, are attended by thousands of bridge players who are quite happy to compete for master points. Competitors in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, normally between 500 and 1,000 for each event, expect money or other prizes of substantial value; in return, they pay comparatively large entry fees. These events are usually held in attractive holiday resorts, so that the players can enjoy a short holiday as well as the competition.

I have often wondered why these events attract so many players destined never to reach the top flight. The answer must be that they enjoy meeting the very best players and derive much satisfaction when they achieve their occasional good scores against the experts. There are certain events, of course, notably individuals and short pairs competitions, in which luck plays a major part and outsiders can occasionally finish at the top of the list.

These thoughts were provoked by my experiences at the recent Juan les Pins Festival. I played with Wolfgang Meinl in the three-session mixed pairs, and we suffered two bad results at the hands of two mediocre performers who had nothing to lose and who bid an unbeatable slam, by accident, and an unbeatable game on insufficient values. On the third board of the set, I felt that I had to make an unusual bid in an attempt to secure a "top" and salvage something from the wreck. This was the lay-out, dealt by East with North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
♠Q 8 6 4 3
♥K 9 3
♦5 4 2
♣7 6

WEST	EAST
♠5	♠A 9 7 2
♥J 8 5 2	♥A 10 6 4
♦A Q J 8 3	♦K 10 9
♣A 4 2	♣Q 9

SOUTH
♠K J 10
♥Q 7
♦7 6
♣K J 10 8 5 3

(1) I would normally have rather better trumps for a low-level penalty double, but the vulnerability was in our favour and I decided to try for the +500 which would beat those East-West pairs who bid and made game on our cards.

I led the five of spades, and my partner won with the ace and returned the two of spades for me to ruff. I switched to the ace and eight of diamonds, and East won with the king and gave me a second spade ruff. I then exited with the jack of hearts, and declarer won with the queen and had to decide how to handle the trump suit. The missing trumps were A-Q-9, and South elected to play me for an original holding of A-9-4-2. He therefore led the king of clubs in an attempt to pin the singleton queen in the East hand, and the penalty was +800.

"Well doubled," said my partner, and I explained quietly that I had to do something after what had happened on the two previous boards.

Shortly afterwards, we were given another chance to retrieve some of the lost points.

Dealer South; East-West vulnerable.

NORTH
♠8
♥9 8 7 6
♦Q 9 7 5 3
♣J 8 4

WEST	EAST
♠A K Q 10 9 2	♠4 3
♥K 10 5 3	♥A J 4
♦2	♦J 10 8 6
♣Q 9	♣10 7 5 3

SOUTH
♠J 7 6 5
♥Q 2
♦A K 4
♣A K 6 2

SOUTH	WEST Markus	NORTH	EAST Meinl
1NT(1)	Double	NB(2)	NB
NB			

(1) North-South were playing a strong no-trump, but I would never dream of opening 1NT with two suits completely unguarded.

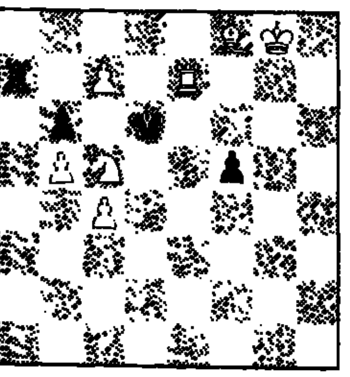
(2) North took rather a gamble by leaving in 1NT doubled; 2D would have been easy on the North-South cards, and there is no game contract available for East-West.

I led the ace of spades and switched to a heart at trick two. My partner won with the ace of hearts and returned a spade, and we took the first ten tricks in the major suits when declarer carelessly discarded a heart from dummy on the last spade. +700 was a "top" on the board.

Chess

By Leonard Barden

No. 1917



White mates in two moves, against any defence (by J. Scheel).

Solution No. 1916

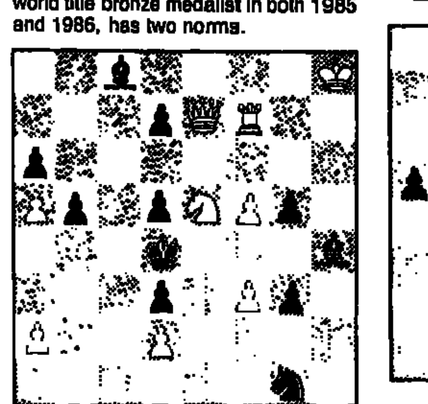
White K at K2, Q at KN7, Rs at QB1 and KR5, B at QR7, Ns at QN5 and Q3, Ps at QR4, QN2, QB6, K6 and KN4. Mate in two.

1 Q-B8 KxBP 2 Q-QR8, or if KxKP 2 N-B7, or if K-B5 2 Q-QB5, or if K-K5 or B moves 2 Q-KB5.

BRITAIN won gold medals last month in the world solving championship at Fontenay, near Paris. The team (sponsored by Lloyds Bank) of Mestel, Lee and Friedgood were all former winners of the bank's open solving contest which annually attracts 2,000 entries. Final totals were Britain 165/170, Finland 164, Israel 149, Sweden and Yugoslavia 145, West Germany 141, France 139, Netherlands 131. Throughout, the battle was between the British masters at over-the-board chess and the Finnish solving specialists Perkonoja and Valtonen.

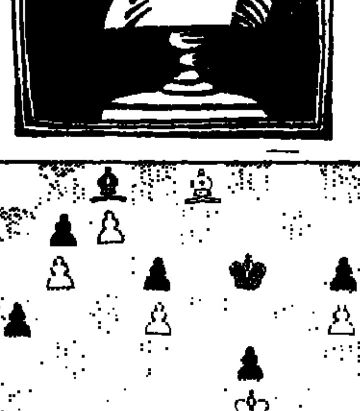
The championship includes two-movers, three-movers, helpmates, self-mates and endgame studies. Over-the-board players do well at studies but find the more artificial problems hard, and the world title was decided in the last few minutes of the final batch of self-mates. Mestel, with maximum points, abandoned his time race with Perkonoja for the individual gold to ensure no errors in the team competition: Lee could not crack the trickiest self-mate but correctly guessed the key and scored a point: Valtonen remembered the problem from its original publication some 20 years earlier yet made an error in his written solution.

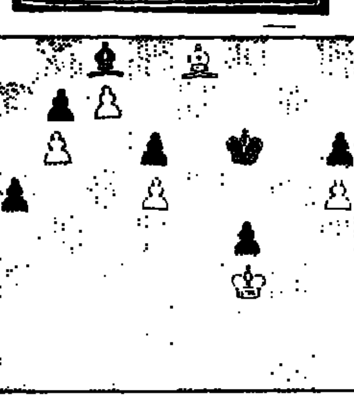
Individual totals of Perkonoja 85/85 (gold medal on faster time), Mestel 85, Lee 80 and Valtonen 79 gave the British pair grandmaster norms for problem solving. A GM solving title may sound trivial beside its over-the-board equivalent, but FIDE's standards are stiff. Three norms are needed, and they can only be scored by achieving 90 per cent or better of the winner's total at the world championship. Thus at present there are only four solving GMs in the world — the two Finns, an Israeli and a Yugoslav. Graham Lee, a 33-year-old British Telecom computer lecturer, world title bronze medalist in both 1985 and 1986, has two norms.



Mestel and Friedgood each took 4 minutes to solve this three-mover at Fontenay: Lee took 9 minutes. Try comparing your own time against our world champions. White mates in three moves, against any defence (by J. van Dijk, 1928). Solution next week.

Mestel flew back to London to play top board for Cambridge University against IM Watson of Oxford in the Legal & General national club final. Oxford led 3-2 and Mestel, overpressing in a double bishop end game blundered a pawn. Paradoxically it proved the winning idea when Black (to move) reached this diagram with a minute or so left in the blitz play-off.





Watson saw 1 . . . K-K4 2 B-B7 . -R5 3 B-K6 P-R6 4 BxB P-R7 5 B-R3 P=Q 6 P=Q but was unsure whether Black has perpetual check: in fact 6 . . . Q-R6 ch draws since if 7 K-B2 Q-K6 ch with checks at K6, K8 and KN6 or if 7 K-K2 with queen interposition at QB1 or QB2 Black can swap queens and draw by KxQP-B4xNP.

Instead Black went 1 . . . P-R5? 2 BxP K-K4 3 B-B2! (decisive tempo gain) B-Q2 4 B-N6 KxP 5 KxP K-B3 6 B-B5 KxP 7 BxB KxP 8 B-K6 K-Q1 9 K-B5 K-K2 10 B-Q5 P-N4 11 K-N6 P-N5 12 B-N3 K-B1 13 KxP Resigns. Black has aimed for the draw with bishop and wrong colour rook pawn, only to find his king cut off.

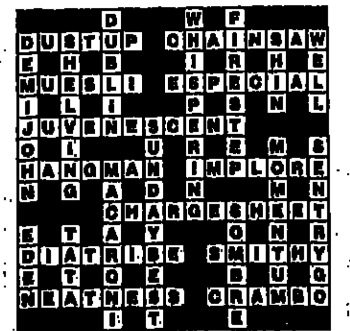
By ARAUCARIA

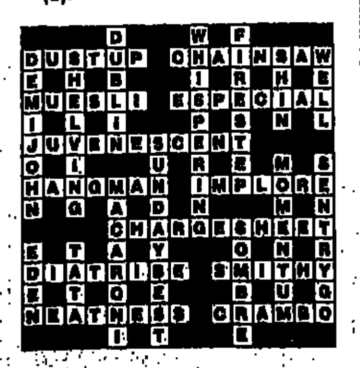
ACROSS

1. Frank hero could be 7 (6).
4. It keeps one warm and quiet (7).
9. Robin's mate, post mortem? (9).
10. Church 11 sounds bigger than 20 (5).
11. Tell which goes where? (5).
12. Volte face in face of daily (9).
13. Sticker in oven, NW6 (7).
15. Home Guard put on some bacon for . . . (6).
17. . . . poet left with either or both? (6).
19. Poem translating lays about policemen (7).
22. Temporary cure due to good behaviour? (9).
24. Card game with ducks is no good (5).
26. Small egg belonging to Christmas, one might hear (5).
27. McGregor's work in "Ginger and Pickles"? (9).
28. Made a fool like a dumpling? (7).
29. Material for 1, 15, etc. (6).

DOWN

1. Swiveller in boat makes bird in stone (7).
2. Lay dead, say, with cargo on board (5).
3. Fresh as coffee, likely to be broken (3, 6).
4. Result of red rag, awfully bad in Scots island (3, 4).
5. Pacific hunter displays neckwear (5).
6. Scrollwork goes ill on end, French version (5-4).
7. President who could be . . . (6).
8. . . . the juggler in George Eliot's poem managed about antique (6).
14. Page to form soil for 27 (4-5).
16. Story-teller found near court? (9).
18. Wildly adoring Jupiter Pluvius (4, 3).
19. Italian capital upset by 21 (6).
20. Wedding for model embraced by Japanese ruler (7).
21. Poet from 17, boy or master? (6).
23. Specify letters for a time (5).
25. Little boy without a medicine bottle (5).





A COUNTRY DIARY

NORFOLK: Towers of mills and churches afford commanding views of the flat marshscapes stretching between Norwich and the eastern seaboard. Birds have to achieve only slightly higher viewpoints to embrace far distant features of the coastline. In clear weather I have watched ospreys, making use of thermals, rise from my fen pools and circle slowly to an immense height before drifting gently south-eastwards on their autumnal migration. Similarly, in the depth of summer, I have seen a small party of spoonbills soar above a flock of gulls until lost to sight in the blue zenith, perhaps returning to Holland after paying Norfolk a short visit. Some of our young herns betray restlessness and climb the skies in search of adventures abroad at this season. Countless waders throng the Arctic tundra's bogs and pools at high summer, rearing their broods and thereafter preparing for departure as days shorten; some, indeed, though partly non-breeders, form a vanguard reaching Norfolk's mudflats and marsh pools before the end of July. Their trills and pipings, night and day, contribute music as delightful if not quite so dramatic as that of the trumpeting of whooper swans that presages the onset of winter.

E. A. Ellis

THIS is the last Country Diary by E. A. "Ted" Ellis, the Norfolk-based naturalist, author and broadcaster, who wrote the feature regularly for two decades. He died last week aged 77. He was a world authority on microfungi, and for some years presented the radio programme, Nature Postbag. *W. D. Campbell writes:*

The death of Ted Ellis marks the end of a very happy and, for me, highly educative relationship. For the past 22 years, with one exception, we had an annual get together around Whitsun in the Breckland of his beloved Norfolk, at the home of my late brother who had scouted out interesting sites to visit. After an inspection of the garden and a sampling of my brother's birch wine, we would visit one of the selected sites, either of Breck or the forest areas with their hidden fens and pools. Then, after slaking our thirst at the local hostelry, we would return to a convivial lunch where there was always much laughter as well as serious discussion of the morning's events. The afternoon expedition to another site followed and by the end of the day I felt I had been privileged yet again to enjoy the company of a unique personality. Ted was an amateur in the true sense of the word: a lover of the wide range of subjects which he studied. I remember his obvious delight on being taken to a secret fen where the pools were shimmering sheets of water-violets in bloom, and soggy ground beneath the sallows and alders was studded with the bright green tufts of marsh fern. But perhaps his greatest pleasure was in the use of his ancient microscope; he was an acknowledged expert on microfungi such as smuts and rusts, and would invariably discover something worthwhile on our jaunts which the rest of us would have passed unnoticed. Another outstanding feature of Ted's knowledge of his county was his ability when we came across such a comparative rarity as a Beehawk moth or the large Broomrape which grows upon its namesake, to quote the year of the last known record. But my outstanding memory of the typical Ted is when, on meeting him by chance in London one morning, he greeted me with: "Hello Bill, I've just had a new experience. I have often been bitten by a six-spot ladybird, but this morning, for the first time ever, I had a nip from a two-spot."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Britain out of step again

On the eve of the Commonwealth mini-summit, the Prime Minister faces similar opposition to her policy towards southern Africa as did her predecessor, Edward Heath, in the early 1970s. Then, as now, British attitudes were out of sympathy with black Africa and with the rest of the Commonwealth.

In 1970, the influential Conservative Commonwealth and Overseas Council had prepared a memorandum relating to "overseas issues facing the next Conservative government and defence outside Nato." Among other things it recommended a return of British troops East of Suez to the Gulf area and the selling of arms to South Africa within a South Atlantic Treaty Organisation; and a pact between the UK, South Africa, Portugal (Angola and Mozambique), Argentina and Brazil to defend the South Atlantic, southern Africa and the Cape route.

As an adviser to several African and Arab governments, I was given copies which I passed on to the African governments concerned. Meanwhile, the FCO was strongly advising Mr Heath against these policies and producing political assessment papers proving that Britain's economic, trade, and financial future in Africa lay with black Africa and not with the white South African regime.

Mr Heath apparently reacted strongly, stating: "I will not take instructions from an engine driver" (the then permanent under-secretary at the FCO was Sir Denis Greenhill and the reference related to the mandarin's former spell as a management trainee with the old LNER).

Lobby correspondents whom Mr Heath had invited to the Commonwealth conference in Singapore, were briefed by No. 10's press office that Mr Heath would score a great victory. But at the FCO the knives were out and the diplomatic and Commonwealth correspondents were told of great trouble to come.

Not only was Mr Heath opposed at the Singapore conference, but at a private party there was a slanging match between him and the presidents of Uganda (Obote), Tanzania (Nyerere) and Zambia (Kaunda) which ended with Mr Heath shouting: "I wonder how many of you gentleman will be able to return to your countries."

Obote could not get a plane for five days by which time he had been ousted by General Amin.

However, Mr Heath's policies were defeated and, nearly two decades on, Britain is again the odd man out.

While no one except a financial and economic tyro could possibly believe sanctions will ever bring down the South African regime, it is vital for Britain that the Prime Minister is seen to be in sympathy with the rest of the Commonwealth for far stronger measures against that country.

Mrs Thatcher should defer to this unanimous body of opinion. In doing so, she might also remember the old Chinese proverb: "The taller the willow the further it can afford to bend."

Grenville Jones,
Mountpelier Row,
Twickenham, Middlesex.

Hugo Young's sentence "(a Prime Minister) who genuinely understands that some international action is now essential in the British interest, and one who possesses enough far-sighted cunning to make this as unextravagant as possible" says everything about perfidious Albion.

Mr Young wants deviousness above frankness and seems to share most of Mrs Thatcher's conclusions but resents her open style. Mrs Thatcher's interview is described as "emotional" but she said nothing new or fresh and the emotional person seemed to be Hugo Young.

Give me Thatcher's blunt directness, even when one disagrees with her, rather than the slippery Richelieuesque approach Hugo Young wants to use to serve "British interest."

In the same style of "British interest" Laurence Cockroft overlooks two important facts — one is that there are millions of South Africans, not expatriates, who are black and other colours who want to avoid "a repetition of the political mess which has occurred in the rest of Africa" (Cockroft's words, not mine). The second is that South Africa is no colony, even if Mr Cockroft has imperial hangovers, and international pressures can be a goad or a pep pill, depending on your view, but South Africans, 70 per cent of whom are black but no more politically homogeneous than the rest of us, will have to sort it out.

In fact Mr Cockroft is not far off the dangerous argument that all African governments are bad governments, white dominated African governments are less bad than black ones so why help to put into power the greater of two evils?

Prospective parliamentary candidates on the beach in England can indulge that debate to promote their domestic political purposes but those of us in South African constituency politics recognise the state of the tide but we have to beach as best we can through the surf, not build sandcastles in Halifax.

Graham McIntosh MP,
(Pietermaritzburg North).

Perhaps someone could explain why it seems that it is always the staunchest free-traders who oppose sanctions because they will not work, while supporters of protection (and even fortress economies) support sanctions.

Brian Easton,
Wellington, NZ.

Fall-out in Canada

L. D. Romanosky (Letters, July 13) claims that all the drinking water reservoirs on the West Coast of Canada recently *had to be* closed due to *severe* radioactivity. It is further indicated that the US Government waited for the right winds and *vented* all the underground *radioactivity* (ofg an underground nuclear test in Nevada) into the atmosphere, *directly into Canada*. While this makes for an interesting article and serves to indict the US Government for this apparently calculated, irresponsible and anti-Canadian action, it just does not reflect any of the associated facts.

While the US did vent some radioactivity on April 22 and 23 after an underground nuclear test carried out on April 21, a check with the Canadian Bureau of Radiation indicated that they *detected no such radioactivity* at any of their Western Canadian monitoring stations during the period preceding the arrival into Canada of the first fallout from the Chernobyl accident, on May 5. Some reservoirs on the West Coast were shut down by a local official after *trace* amounts of radioactivity, well below the Canadian drinking water standards, were detected, due to a lack of understanding by the official of the proper application of the standard. The record thus stands to be corrected.

Allan Sourkes, PhD,
Walter Huda, PhD,
Dept of Radiology,
Univ. of Manitoba.

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August 10, 1986 Vol. 135 No. 6

Clean French hands?

Bertrand Le Gendre seems to me to open up an important new aspect of the Rainbow Warrior *affaire* (July 20). He says (I quote) "the Portuguese photographer who was trapped and drowned when he went to recover his camera in the bomb-shattered wreck of the Rainbow Warrior."

Thus it seems, contrary to popular belief, that the photograper was *not* killed by the explosion; but his death was due to the negligence of the harbour authorities allowing him to enter a dangerous wreckage, which was in their charge.

Brian Thomas,
34230 Paulhan, France.

Western message from Moscow

The document you published (August 3) purports to be the views of senior Soviet officials, members of a newly formed "Movement for Socialist Renewal." I have felt that there exists a suspicious congruity between the points made in the document and the arguments that have often been pushed by the more hawkish US and Western politicians.

The congruity is nowhere more clear than in the statement on Soviet foreign and disarmament policy. This, I quote, "is based on mistaken assumptions about the causes of tension in the world (the arms race), and pursues false goals (universal and complete disarmament). The arms race is a consequence, not a cause, of international tension, and to achieve the goals of universal and complete disarmament it is necessary to seek ways to liquidate the centres of international tension, the 'hot spots' of our planet."

Such a view obviously conforms to the line of those in US policy-making circles who are openly reluctant to enter into negotiations that will lead towards substantial arms control and comprehensive disarmament agreements but are happier instead to divert and restrict these negotiations towards local disputes, such as Nicuragua, Afghanistan, Libya, etc. It falls short only of blaming the USSR for the creation, in the first place, of these "hot spots."

Moreover, the doomsday forecasts of the Soviet economy and prophesies of its imminent collapse are usually used by the same US circles to justify the policies of accelerated arms build-up adopted by the Reagan administration.

The document itself offers little in the way of a serious Socialist alternative to the Soviet system other than calling for the transplantation of a selection of what are considered superior Western economic and political methods into the Soviet Union. Its message comes close to openly and directly challenging socialism as a viable economic and political order.

As such this document appears a carbon copy of the official but less sophisticated assessments and theories of the Soviet system that have appeared in the West during the past 70 years.

I. Cohen,
Leigh Gardens,
London NW10.

I have been reading and translating Soviet publications on science, politics and social sciences for 30 years and after reading Martin Walker's articles I must say that there seems to be something highly dubious about certain parts of the main document and indeed about the way in which it has been conceived and the style of its presentation.

Much of the information contained in the "manifesto" of the MSR has already been published in the Soviet press particularly in the academic journals, and it is possible that sources outside the USSR could have compiled the "manifesto", adding pieces here and there to provide it with its apparent integrity.

It is true that Soviet writers have been increasingly critical of the system inside the Soviet Union and I have been reporting many of these criticisms in the British press for some time. However, I find it hard to believe that any "loyal" Soviet citizen at whatever level in the hierarchy could write such statements as "our leaders give no thought to tomorrow, to the future of the country and its people."

To me there is something wrong about the style of the "manifesto": it is too clever for most Soviet propagandists and ideologues I have ever read; it is too direct.

Martin Walker claims to be able to vouch for the eminence of some of the authors of the Russian document. I would like to examine the original Russian version before finally making up my mind, but your revelations will certainly provoke some speculation as to the identities of those authors.

Kenneth Shaw,
Copythorne,
Brixham, South Devon.

Devolution in Sri Lanka

The much-heralded Sri Lankan devolution proposals have been unveiled with the approval of India, and some discussion has begun. However, we who have a good knowledge of the deep division between the main races in Sri Lanka cannot accept it as a solution.

To relegate the Tamils to the level of 1/9 or even 2/9 — taking the argument of the nine provinces created by the British for their administrative convenience — will only convince them of the lack of recognition of the Tamil nation itself.

We believe that the "Government" would do well to look at our plan:

The North should be completely Tamil-oriented, while the East should have a tripartite regional body with the Muslims playing a leading part. Similarly, the Central Province should have a power-sharing council reflecting the area's population structure. The remaining six provinces should be merged into two larger regions mirroring the bias towards the Low Country Sinhalese and the Up Country Sinhalese.

P. Mylvaganam,
Oxford International Resource and Advice Centre.

Comic cuts of the V-bomber

Your story entitled "Toy manufacturers do well by Stealth" (August 3), reminds me of when I worked for Normalair, a subsidiary of Westland Aircraft. I was asked to design air-control equipment for the ventilated suits of the Vulcan V-bomber crews.

I was not allowed to contact the firm, Avro, which made the bomber; a special department liaised with it. I asked this department to get me some information on the plane's seating arrangements.

This was important because the equipment had to have five outlets for the air to the suits, and I had to know which direction the outlets had to point.

But the liaison chap said: "It's so secret that I cannot bring any drawings, and I can't give you an answer to your questions."

I mentioned this to a colleague; he looked amused and asked me to wait until he came back from lunch. He returned with a copy of his son's comic — Magnet, I think — which had a beautiful drawing of the Vulcan, showing among many other "secret" items exactly were the crew sat.

Avro was happy with my design.

Rowly Barnard,
Poole, Dorset.

Labour in new Militant row

THERE does not have to be a general election until 1988 and there is no reason why Mrs Thatcher, with her huge Commons majority, should declare one any earlier. But the idea has got around that the Prime Minister will try her luck next year, possibly in May or October, so all political actions and utterances from now have to be judged with that possibility in mind.

Does Mrs Thatcher want to be held responsible, in the run-up to an election, for damaging Commonwealth relations over the question of sanctions against South Africa, for instance? Presumably not, hence her reluctant agreement this week to go along with some very limited economic measures to demonstrate disapproval of the upholders of apartheid.

It is also taken as read that the Government's willingness to spend a little more on local government, and on education, are an effort to persuade Tory councillors and voters that the years of austerity were for their own good, but that the future, with its promise of lower taxation all round, will be brighter and better.

It was with the election in mind that the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Mr John MacGregor, goaded the Labour Party into an unseemly row over the cost of its spending plans. To finance its electoral promises, said Mr MacGregor, Labour would have to increase the basic-rate tax from its present 29p to 53p in the pound, or raise value-added tax from 15 to 48 per cent. "Fantasy figures" replied the shadow Chancellor, Mr Roy Hattersley.

The former Labour Home Secretary, Mr Merlyn Rees, suggested that there should be an independent audit of Labour's programme to stop the "current deceit coming from Tory ministers." Mr MacGregor said he was happy to accept the challenge, but Mr Hattersley would have none of it. The exchanges will continue for a long time yet.

Labour did, however, delete from its programme a proposal to reduce, by taxation, the incomes of the "richest" 20 per cent of the population when it became apparent that the 20 per cent would include people — potential Labour supporters — earning £27,000 or possibly less. So the extra £3·6 billion needed to finance improvements in social security will now come from the richest five per cent.

Mr Robert Kilroy-Silk, Labour MP for the Merseyside constituency of Knowsley North, threw a spanner in the party's electoral works when he decided to resign his party seat because, he said, he had lost his taste for politics after a three-year battle with the Militant Tendency, which had been trying to replace him with a one of its own supporters. The party leader, Mr Neil Kinnock, dismissed as "rubbish" Mr Kilroy-Silk's claim that he had suffered three miserable years at the hands of Militant.

The embarrassment for Mr Kinnock, who has belatedly declared war on Militant, was the greater because Mr Kilroy-Silk is a personable, ambitious young MP who would almost certainly have qualified for ministerial office in any Labour administration. The episode blew a hole in the attempts

THE WEEK IN BRITAIN
by James Lewis

to promote a cosy new image of a Labour Party cleansed of the influence of Militant.

There were indications that the timing of Mr Kilroy-Silk's departure had been carefully calculated. He has a book coming out in September, lifting the lid on his struggle with Militant, and he also took care to find himself another job — as the presenter of the television chat show — before deciding to quit politics.

The trouble with Militant is that it refuses to go quietly. Nearly fifty Liverpool Labour councillors — many of them Militant supporters — have been suspended from local government office, and subjected to financial penalties which will make most of them bankrupt, for wilfully delaying the city's rate-making procedures last year. They will continue to control the city, however, until they have exhausted every avenue of appeal. The penalties imposed on them were upheld by the Court of Appeal last week, but the councillors now intend taking their case to the House of Lords.

If, as seems likely, that final appeal also fails, Labour is almost certain to lose control of Liverpool in the resulting byelections. But the city's financial problems are now so horrendous — it had to be bailed out with a loan of £30 million from a Japanese bank last week — that the Liberals, who are the likeliest winners, can have little relish for what lies ahead.

The prosperous South-east of England, which has escaped the worst effects of Thatcherism and the recession, will be hardest hit by the decision of British Aerospace to shed 2,500 jobs. It involves the closure of the 70-year-old aircraft factory at Weybridge, Surrey, which will be the biggest single cutback experience by the South-east in recent years. It would, furthermore, have been greeted with anger from the Tory backbenches had the Commons still been sitting when the announcement was made.

The Confederation of British Industry expressed mounting concern at the declining industrial base when it forecast that manufacturing industry would shed jobs at the rate of 6,000 a month for the next few months. The organisation, in one of its gloomiest surveys in recent years, concluded that the rate of job losses in industry is now accelerating again. Its officials warned that continued closure of plants like that of BAe at Weybridge would make it more difficult for domestic industry to copy with any increased demand in later years, and would result in more imported goods.

The Government decided to move the Royal Engineers into Northern Ireland to do essential maintenance and reconstruction work on security bases in place of civilian building workers who have been intimidated by the IRA. John Laing Construction, one of Britain's biggest civil engineering firms, last week became the third company to announce that it could not continue working for the security forces.

Mr John Kyle, who was shot dead last week, was the fourth person to die at the hands of the IRA since it began threatening workers building a new police station at Londonderry just over a year ago. Since then, the terrorist organisation has stepped up the intimidation by issuing statements naming specific firms and individuals as future targets.

In the Irish Republic, the punt was devalued by eight per cent within the European Monetary System to improve its competitiveness in the export markets, notably Britain. The punt, which was trading at 78p against the pound sterling about a year ago, had reached 95p by last week, and the unwanted appreciation was making life difficult for Irish exporters and tourist operators.

Alert at Cyprus bases as Beirut group admits raid

By Gareth Parry

BRITAIN'S two huge sovereign bases on Cyprus are on full alert as British and Greek Cypriot security forces search the island for the pro-Libyan terrorists who fired rocket-propelled grenades and mortars at the RAF base at Akrotiri.

Sunday night's attack, which injured two women, was claimed in Beirut by a previously unknown faction calling itself the Unified Nasserite Organisation. It said the bombing was in retaliation for the American air strikes on Libya on April 15, and it charged that Akrotiri played a part in the attack.

The assault was the first on a British military installation since the air raids, which were made by F111 bombers operating from US air bases in Britain.

The claim published in Beirut's leading independent daily, An-Nahar, said the attack was "in revenge for the martyrs of our nation in Egypt, Libya, Lebanon, Palestine and Syria".

As Greek Cypriot security forces hunted the attackers, who are believed to have entered the island by boat from Beirut, 130 miles away, British military police with automatic weapons tightened security around Akrotiri and the other base at Dhekelia.

Guards were also strengthened at the intelligence listening post at Ayios Nicolaos and on the summit of Mount Olympus.

The British military spokesman, Major Gordon Birdwood, said Mrs Sandra Edwards, aged 25, and Mrs Eileen Malpass, aged 32, the wives of non-commissioned officers, were slightly injured in the attack, and only "minor damage" was done to married quarters and the sports complex at Akrotiri.

Newspaper reports, however, quoted witnesses on a nearby beach, crowded with civilians at the weekend, as saying the missiles were part of a heavy barrage which was accompanied by small arms fire, and that the missiles exploded among British servicemen and their families swimming on the base's beach.

Cypriot police sources said the attack was apparently carried out by two or more groups from sand dunes about one mile from the base perimeter. The police information, provided before the responsibility claim, tallied with the Unified Nasserite Organisation claim, which said the attack was executed by three squads of the organisation.

British military authorities on Cyprus have been on a state of increased alert since April 15, when the Americans bombed Tripoli. Access roads to the base areas, which cover 256 square miles and accommodate an estimated 10,000 British servicemen, civilian workers and their families, are blocked by barbed wire.

Cypriot police said security forces were hunting for the attackers seen driving off in two rented cars. The search included roadblocks and surveillance of ports and airports.

Security forces said they were investigating "strong indications" that the guerrilla group could have come through the Turkish-occupied north of Cyprus.

They said heavy weapons used in the attack could not have passed through security checks at Cypriot ports and airports.

Cyprus, with its open society and excellent communications, has long been favoured as a base of clandestine operations by feuding political groups.

Leftwing Cypriot and Arab groups claim that British bases were used as a communications link for the Israeli raid on Tunis, and the US attacks on Libya. British and Cypriot authorities have repeatedly denied this.

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

	Sterling Rates August 4	Previous Closing Rates
Australia	2 4344-2 4374	2.4570-2.4605
Austria	21 43-21 49	21 72-21.75
Belgium	63.20-63.39	64.09-64.28
Canada	2 0307-2.0336	2.0494-2.0529
Denmark	11.46-11.50	11.67-11.70
France	9.92-9.94	10.06-10.07
Germany	3.054-3 058	3 093-3.097
Hong Kong	11.44-11.45	11.620-11.626
Ireland	1.0947-1.1047	1.0504-1.0514
Italy	2,088.98-2,101.34	2,122-2,126
Japan	226.06-226.46	228.09-228.47
Netherlands	3.443-3.447	3.490-3.495
Norway	10.87-10 88	10 97-10.99
Portugal	214.62-216.24	216.66-218.28
Spain	198.45-198.73	200 44-200.73
Sweden	10.24-10.26	10.33-10.34
Switzerland	2.45-2.46	2.47-2.48
USA	1.4690-1.4700	1.4845-1.4865
ECU	1.4462-1.4480	1.4695-1 4713

FT 30 Share Index 1261·5 Gold $359.52

TSB flotation ignores ruling

By Peter Rodgers

THE £1 billion-plus Trustee Savings Bank flotation is to go ahead next month, despite a Lords ruling which says that the bank belonged to the State until an Act of Parliament last year.

The Treasury tried to counter the political onslaught by claiming that it was a Labour Act of Parliament in 1976 which gave up any government ownership rights over the TSB. It also disputed the interpretation put on the Lords' judgment.

After a meeting at the Chancellor's residence, 11 Downing Street, a spokesman said that Lord Templeman, the law lord whose ruling caused the row, did not rule that the assets of the TSB were owned by the Government.

"It would have been unthinkable for the Government to have laid claim to those assets," he added. "The TSB Act 1976 says that the property of the central board 'shall not be regarded as the property of or property held on behalf of the Crown'."

The Treasury said the one thing that does not appear in Lord Templeman's judgment is the proposition that the Government owns the TSBs.

A spokesman argued that it could not possibly have proceeded as if it did because the 1976 act, which removed many restrictions on the TSBs, included the phrase that its assets did not belong to the Crown.

The Treasury also suggested that there was a distinction between the State ownership discussed by Lord Templeman and the act of nationalisation which would give the Government the proceeds of selling the TSBs.

The TSB and its merchant bankers, Lazard Brothers, said that there would be no change in the sell-off planned for mid-September, but the Opposition Treasury spokesman, Dr Oonagh McDonald, said: "The Government has just lost the British taxpayer £1,000 million." The money could have been used to cut a penny from income tax or repair roads, hospitals and houses and create thousands of jobs, she added.

Gurkhas get their marching orders

By David Pallister

HAWAII 1986 will not be joining the Defence of Kut al Amara, Mesopotamia and Rangoon Road in the honourable annals of the 7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles. But the battle will no doubt be avidly disputed for years in the Kingdom of Nepal by the 111 Gurkha infantrymen who have been discharged from the British army in Hong Kong because their "services were no longer required".

Despite a two-month inquiry by its special investigation branch, the Ministry of Defence claims that the origins of the engagement are still uncertain. The casualties, however, were two injured: an unnamed Gurkha officer with two broken ribs and acting Major Corin Pearce, aged 31, who also sustained two broken ribs and a cut to the head which needed 15 stitches. Happily, the Gurkhas' fearsome kukri blades were not employed.

It happened on Operation Union Pacific, a six-week field training exercise in Hawaii for a company of 136 soldiers from the regiment's first battalion, which normally spends its time guarding the Hong Kong-China border. The mere sight of these men apparently persuaded the Argentinians on Mount Tumbledown to surrounder in the Falklands war. Major Pearce, the company commander, had been on secondment with the battalion from the Royal Anglian Regiment for just over a year.

At the end of the exercise "a disturbance" broke out after a party. Major Pearce and the Gurkha officer intervened to restore order and were attacked. Back in Hong Kong 18 Gurkhas were arrested and the SIB began their investigation.

"The arrested men and other soldiers refused to cooperate," the Ministry of Defence said on Monday, shattering the 150-year-old myth that Britain's brave little mercenaries were always ferociously loyal to their officers.

All the soldiers were eventually released. "The failure to assist the authorities led to a total breakdown in trust between these Gurkhas and their officers," the MoD said. "There have been no criminal charges because of lack of evidence."

The discharged men will be flown back to Katmandu for the long trek home into the mountains. Since they have not been dishonourably discharged, some will retain their pension rights or a gratuity, depending on length of service.

It will not be a fortune. A single private in Hong Kong earns £1,700 a year, a married man £4,220, which is one reason why the British Government still recruits tribesmen from the Himalayas for a cost-effective presence east of Suez.

Four battalions are based in Hong Kong, one in Brunei and the last is in the UK as part of the 5th Airborne Brigade. Here their pay increases to £4,000, compared to a British private's basic of £5,274.

In the poor mountains of Nepal that is still good money. "We have 20 applicants for each post," the MoD said cheerfully.

The Ministry of Defence added that some of the dismissed men were appealing.

High flying prices despite cheaper fuel

AS your summer holiday approaches, it is altogether possible that you will have succumbed to a common form of air travel sickness which strikes the sufferer even before he or she steps foot on a plane. The symptom is a sharp, hollow pain in the bank account brought on by the cost of the tickets.

It might have occurred to you that this summer of all summers the pain could have been a little less. Airliners run on jet fuel, don't they? And since jet fuel is made from crude oil, the price of which has dropped more sharply this year than at any time since the 1930s, someone somewhere must be saving a very great deal of money. And it isn't you.

This line of reasoning is certainly one that the airlines themselves were expecting you to follow — to the extent that one of them has been rehearsing its responses in semi-private. On May 23, British Airways News carried an article by the Chairman, Lord King, claiming that the fall in crude prices had led to "some wild predictions about the effect of this fall on civil aviation and therefore, by extension, on air fares."

"I am afraid," he went on, "that stories about our fuel bill falling by hundreds of millions of pounds a year are unhappily unfounded." The previous edition carried a more detailed but anonymous refutation of the accusation which BA obviously feared was about to be levelled at it.

"If you think the fall in crude oil prices has done for British Airways and its passengers exactly what it has done for motorists across the UK, forget it," the article began. Its author put forward two reasons why you should.

One was that less than half the airlines' requirements were pumped aboard aircraft in Britain, the rest being bought in countries charging up to three times as much. More importantly, the article claimed that while jet fuel was derived from crude oil "their prices are not directly associated . . . there is more of a relationship between the cost of jet fuel and heating oil and an increased demand for heating oil affects the supply and price of jet fuel."

The article concluded that in the current financial year, BA was expecting its fuel bill to drop by a mere 6 per cent. "Biggest reason for this cutback is not the fall in fuel price but more efficient aircraft."

It is rare that one comes across such an artful concoction of half-truths as this. BA, like other companies, draws up its projections well in advance of the end of the financial year. The one referred to by the article was clearly worked out at a time when oil prices had only just begun to fall and it would have been unwise to count on savings other than those generated by greater fuel efficiency.

But if it was stretching belief to claim that the company was realistically working on a figure of 6 per cent three months ago, it is downright incredible now. Nevertheless, British Airways was sticking to it last week: "I see no reason why that position should have changed," a spokesman said.

There is, to be sure, a link between movements in the prices of jet fuel and those sorts of heating oil which, like aviation fuel, are classed as kerosene. But the relationship only exists on the spot markets in Rotterdam, Singapore and Houston from which the major airlines rarely, if ever, buy their supplies.

The spot price is used internally by the oil companies to fix the price at which their refining arms "sell" refined products like aviation fuel to their marketing divisions. When — for whatever reason — it goes up, the oil company executives who negotiate contracts for the sale of jet fuel with the airlines are under pressure to secure a higher price so that their end of the business can turn a profit. When it goes down, they can afford to give way a bit.

Increased winter demand for other kinds of kerosene did indeed play a part in the rise in the price of jet fuel at the end of last year, but then reduced summer demand helped it to come down in the first six months of this year. As always, though, the principal determinant has been the price of crude. To deny that is like saying that the price of bread is not governed by the price of wheat.

The plunge in the cost of crude from almost $30 last December to under $9 today has slashed the price of jet kerosene on the Rotterdam spot market from $275 then to $108 now, bringing the negotiators from the oil companies under enormous pressure from their airline counterparts on the other side of the table to pass on the benefits.

But have they done so? Gauging the real cost of fuel to the airlines is not easy. As British Airways rightly pointed out, it varies from airport to airport. But the major international airlines go to great lengths to avoid taking more than a fraction of their fuel from those airports, like Harare, Nairobi and the Maldive Islands, where because of tax or the high cost of transporting it from the nearest refinery, the authorities do indeed charge two or three times the going rate.

The overwhelming bulk of the fuel burnt by the big international airlines is taken on board at the big international airports where there is not tax at all. For this reason, the relationship between the prices of crude oil and jet kerosene is actually more, not less, direct than the link between crude oil and motorists' petrol which, in Britain, attracts duty of more than £1 a gallon.

British Airways in common with most other airlines refuses to discuss the prices it pays for fuel on the grounds that it is "sensitive, competitive information". The oil companies, on the other hand, are prepared in most cases to provide figures so long as they are not identified by name.

Figures collected on this basis suggest that the price paid by major airlines at Heathrow, which is more or less representative of the other big European airports, has fallen from a peak of 90 to 95 cents per US gallon last December to between 45 and 50 cents for the most recent contracts — a drop of approximately 50 per cent.

This is not, admittedly, as great as the fall in crude prices. The difference reflects the efforts of the oil companies to keep some of the extra profit for themselves.

But 50 per cent is 50 per cent. And fuel accounts for about a fifth of an airline's total costs. So why is this massive drop in their single biggest expense not being reflected in their fares?

In normal circumstances, one could only conclude that they were hoping to make bigger profits at the expense of their customers. But these are not normal circumstances.

The airlines, who were already facing the prospect of a massive bill for extra security measures at the beginning of the financial year, are now having to weather a disastrous fall in transatlantic traffic as a result of Mrs Thatcher's decision to allow the United States to use its British bases for the bombing of Libya. Savings on fuel are helping to mitigate the damage.

But then Lord King can hardly give that as a reason, since it is Mrs Thatcher who will ultimately decide on the privatisation he so ardently desires.

By John Hooper

Electricity profits soar to £944m

By Michael Smith

ELECTRICITY prices, which were cut in June, could be held at the lower levels until next April because of soaring profits in the industry.

Profits of the Electricity Council, which oversees the area boards and the Central Electricity Generating Board, soared to £944 million in the past year. A year earlier, the industry lost £1.7 billion because of the miners' strike.

It is expected that a final decision on prices will not be taken until October, but the Electricity Council says it wants to keep prices as low as possible.

However, the council's hopes were described as "disappointing" by the Electricity Consumers' Council, which said fuel costs had fallen to 1983 levels. In addition, the industry had achieved savings and sales were higher than expected.

"All this should allow the industry to cut prices back to last year's levels or below from this autumn and to hold these prices in 1988," said the EEC's deputy director, Mr Toby Harris. "Instead, Sir Philip Jones talks only of continuing the present 0.2 pence rebate until April."

Sir Philip Jones, the council's chairman, said the past year had been one of considerable achievement and progress for the industry.

Domestic sales of electricity rose by 4.6 per cent and industrial usage by 4.5 per cent.

The CEGB, whose turnover accounts for 80 per cent of the council's revenue, earned a trading profit of £645 million. But, after deducting interest charges, the final profit fell to £141 million.

Howe's long hours of toil that add up to ambition

WHEN Sir Geoffrey Howe's RAF VC-10 touched down at Heathrow at the conclusion of his traipse round southern Africa the usual ministerial car was waiting for him behind the VIP terminal. He and Lady Howe climbed in and set off for the Foreign Secretary's official residence in Carleton Gardens.

If ever a man had earned a rest it was Sir Geoffrey. One of his most senior aides watched him go with genuine personal sympathy before getting into a hire car for his own journey to the Foreign Office. He knew his boss faced a personal confrontation with the Prime Minister that evening, to be followed next day by a lengthy meeting of ministers and a full session of the Cabinet.

Thanks to some difficult traffic on the M4, the official did not reach his office for more than an hour. When he got there he was astounded to find his boss already at is desk, shaved, showered, wearing fresh clothes, and working at his papers.

But that was not all. Sir Geoffrey duly met Mrs Thatcher to brief her on his trip, then took home four despatch boxes full of documents and telegrams. Next morning, all had been read and initialled by the Foreign Secretary and returned to the appropriate minister or official.

This awesome capacity for work is, of course, one of the reasons for Sir Geoffrey's success as a politician. Certainly he did not get where he is through the sparkling nature of his public persona. He has had to outdo his rivals in what is, nowadays, an extremely hard working trade. He has achieved it by deliberately cutting his sleeping time to a bare four hours a night during the week. He tops it up at weekend by allowing himself a luxurious lie-in of six or seven hours.

Apart from the Prime Minister herself, I can think of only one serious rival to Sir Geoffrey in this appalling lifestyle — namely, Harold Wilson in his Downing Street years. Lord Wilson, struck down by illness, is now a shadow of his former self. But in his heyday his capacity to recover from total exhaustion was, like Howe's, phenomenal.

One is, of course, entitled to ask whether so preposterous a workload is conducive to logical thought or considered judgment. But there is, in Sir Geoffrey's case, more to it than just physical and mental stamina. Unlike the other two, he has an almost saintlike capacity to turn the other cheek.



Sir Geoffrey: biding his time.

That quality was on public display last week in Lusaka, when he was the victim for the second time in a month of a televised stream of abuse from the Zambian president, Kenneth Kaunda. But the same quality has long been an embarrassing feature of the way the Thatcher Cabinet conducts its business in private.

It is not — as some versions have it — that Sir Geoffrey simply bows his head and allows the Prime Minister's frequent outbursts of exasperated criticism to wash over him. According to witnesses who have sat through the phenomenon frequently, he keeps on arguing in his familiar mumbly way, he never lets up.

By Ian Aitken

Such determination has always taken a fair amount of moral courage, even in the days of Mrs Thatcher's "glad confident morning" as a conviction politician. It takes a great deal more now that glad confident morning has given way to an obsessive atmosphere of siege which currently pervades the Downing Street bunker.

But it is unlikely that Sir Geoffrey's courage, persistence and equanimity have ever been subjected to so stern a test as the one which now faces him over South African sanctions. He will have to bounce — and keep on bouncing — as never before.

But the question is why he puts up with it? — indeed, why he has put up with it for more than ten years? Why does he not pick up his papers in the middle of one of the Prime Minister's legendary tirades and walk out, just as Michael Heseltine walked out of the Cabinet room earlier this year?

There can be very little doubt that such a step would inflict serious damage on his tormentor — far more serious than the damage caused by the resignation of Heseltine, or by the subsequent departure of Leon Brittan. Indeed, the odds are that the damage would be terminal for Mrs Thatcher, if not for the Government.

Even the Iron Lady must be becoming aware of the existence of this threat to her survival. In such matters she is learning fast, since it is not so long since she faced the possibility — of losing both her law officers over the Westland leak scandal. That, too, could have brought her down.

Such things are undoubtedly a new experience for a woman who has ruthlessly transformed her Cabinet, in the space of under seven years, from a body representative of the whole Conservative Party into a clique largely representative of an untypical Tory faction. What must make the experience all the more unpleasant for her is the realisation that the threat comes from someone she has treated with such consistent contempt.

So let us pose the question once more — why does he put up with it, when even the affable Sir Geoffrey knows he holds her political life in his hands?

Well, there is always the undeniable fact that the Foreign Secretary is an uncommonly nice chap. Even colleagues who regard him as responsible for the destruction of this country's manufacturing industry during his stint as Chancellor are prepared to acknowledge his overriding decency.

He is also strikingly loyal. Almost alone among his Cabinet colleagues, past as well as present, he has consistently refused to utter even the mildest personal criticism of Her Indoors. Whitehall's vast and growing anti-Thatcher folklore owes nothing — or almost nothing to him.

But in politics, where principles are supposed to (and sometimes actually do) outweigh personal considerations, such qualities ought not to be decisive in keeping Sir Geoffrey at his post when he clearly has widening differences with Mrs Thatcher. Is there an additional ingredient, then?

Some of his closest colleagues believe that there is, and that it is a quality not normally associated with him — namely, personal ambition. Sir Geoffrey, they suspect, has come to believe he has suddenly acquired a real chance of becoming Prime Minister himself.

After all, recent surveys of Tory backbenchers have suggested that he is high on the list of people's first choice for the succession. Moreover, he is higher still on the party's list of second choices in a widely spread field. Even a majority of the rival candidates see him as a preferable alternative to the others.

In other words, he is in with a chance as everyone's compromise candidate. But before Sir Geoffrey's modest band of admirers get carried away with the prospect, one caveat is essential: serious compromise candidates rarely enter the contest with a dripping dagger in their hands.

To be sure, there are still those who believe that the Conservative Party would actually improve its electoral prospects by getting rid of Mrs Thatcher, even at this late stage of the Parliament. But few would expect her assassin to succeed her.

So there will be no "doing a Heseltine". Sir Geoffrey, I fear, will soldier on as usual, dutifully doing his best to keep the lady within the bounds of common sense. But now he will be waiting. He knows she can't go on for ever.

Class-linked health gap grows

By Andrew Veitch

THE health gap between rich and poor grew sharply in the first four years of Conservative Government, according to official figures published last week.

Death rates among young semi-skilled and unskilled workers aged 25-44 are more than twice as high as those for professional men and managers of the same age.

Women have also suffered. Those married to men in social classes IV and V are up to 70 per cent more likely to die young than wives of men in classes I and II.

The figures for 1979-83 come from the Government's statistics service, the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, in its decennial report on occupational mortality.

They are likely to prove particularly embarrassing for the Government. They show how death and disease have risen — and will continue to rise — along with poverty and unemployment.

For the first time since 1911, the crucial detailed analysis of deaths in the different social classes has been omitted from the main report. We have calculated the rates from figures contained in 22,000 pages of tables published in microfiche form and priced to the public at £40 (plus VAT).

The figures also show that women's risk of cervical cancer may be linked with their husband's jobs. Those at greatest risk are married to welders, scaffolders, bus, coach and lorry drivers, servicemen, and ships' crews.

Electricians working in power plants run up to twice the risk of contracting leukaemia: the report does not say how many of the men worked in nuclear plants.

Doctors aged 25-34 are more than twice as likely to commit suicide as other men of their age. Those over 65 are more than four times more likely to die of cirrhosis of the liver.

Labour's social services spokesman, Mr Michael Meacher, commented: "Rising class inequalities in illness and death are the stark reality of Thatcherite capitalism. It shows that fighting poverty is now a moral imperative. God knows what the figures will be for 1986."

Occupational Mortality, The Registrar General's Decennial Supplement for Great Britain, 1979-80, 1982-83, Stationery Office, Part I, Commentary, £9.20, Part II, Microfiche tables, £40 plus VAT.

THE WEEK

A COMBINED force of Lebanese soldiers, gendarmes and Syrian military observers, in a key extension of the Syrian-sponsored "security plan" penetrated Beirut's Shi'ite-dominated southern suburbs.

Earlier, the city's fifth bomb explosion in eight days ripped through a cafe in the Christian eastern sector, killing two people and wounding about 30.

At least 55 people died in the four previous blasts, which included car bombs in East and West Beirut.

The deployment has won the assent of the two principal Shi'ite militias, the mainstream Amal and the Iranian-backed Hizbollahis. The latter only gave way after negotiations with the Syrians and — probably — under some pressure from an Iran anxious to reward Syria for its continued support in the Gulf war.

THE Shi'ite Muslim kidnappers of Americans held hostage in Lebanon said at the weekend that they would not negotiate with the Pope, the Archbishop of Canterbury, or President Reagan. The Islamic Jihad group also threatened to kill its hostages "if our demands are not met". It holds at least three Americans.

The kidnappers also said Father Jenco, who was freed on July 26 after 19 months in captivity, was set free on humanitarian grounds and as a goodwill gesture, but also as "a last warning to the American Government".

THE United States announced last week that the Secretary of State, Mr George Schultz, will meet his Soviet opposite number, Mr Eduard Shevardnadze, in September in a process which could lead to a US-Soviet summit later this year.

Meanwhile, the chief Soviet negotiator on disarmament, Mr Viktor Karpov, paid a surprise visit to Peking.

Mr Karpov, who leads the Soviet team in the Geneva negotiations with the US spent four days in Peking briefing Chinese officials. It wa the first high-level Sino-Soviet talks on disarmament in more than two decades.

PRESIDENT Reagan's top advisers last week endorsed a plan to stop Nasa launching commercial and foreign satellites on the shuttle. The plan, part of a new initiative to spur development of a private rocket industry, would effectively end the space agency's efforts to promote the shuttle as an economically self-sufficient satellite-launching system.

THE United States won a resounding trade victory at the weekend when negotiators from more than 50 nations agreed to expand an agreement restricting textile imports from developing countries. The new Multi-Fibre Agreement places even tighter curbs on Third World exports of textiles to industrial countries for the next five years.

BERLIN police said last week that they had arrested Yussef Hisham Nasseri, aged 24, who was sentenced in his absence by an Italian court for complicity in the Achille Lauro hijacking.

THE family of Mr Anatoly Shcharansky, the Russian Jewish dissident freed from prison earlier this year, are to be allowed to join him in Israel. Mr Shcharansky, who now lives in Jerusalem, told Israel Radio that his mother, Mrs Ida Milgrom told him on the telephone from Moscow that she and her second son, Leonid, and his two children, would be able to leave for Israel in about three weeks.

SOVIET officials last week announced the creation of a commission on human rights and humanitarian questions, but said they did not plan to upgrade the current low level of Jewish emigration to Israel and the West.

THE badly mutilated heads of three people were found at a bus stop in Pottuvil, near Safiria in Sri Lanka, after members of a Sinhalese family were kidnapped by Tamil guerrillas, the State Information department reported at the weekend.

MR Bettino Craxi last week told Italy's President Cossiga that he had formed his second Government and presented him with the list of the new cabinet members, thus ending a crisis that began on June 27 with his resignation as Prime Minister.

A SWEEPING victory in Jamaica's municipal elections by Michael Manley's People's National Party increased pressure last week on the Prime Minister, Mr Edward Seaga, to call early general elections.

WEST German police arrested a suspected leader of the Red Army Faction terorist group at the weekend, three weeks after a remote controlled bomb killed a nuclear expert and Siemens executive. Mrs Eva Sybille Haule-Frimpong, aged 32, and two companions were caught in the city of Ruesselsheim, near Frankfurt.

MALAYSIAN voters returned the multi-racial coalition of the Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir Mohamed, to power in the general election at the weekend. The electoral commission said the 13-party National Front had passed the 89-seat mark, giving it an overall majority in the 177-seat Parliament. The predominantly Chinese opposition Democratic Action Party had 14 seats, the Parti Islam, which wants to ban pop music and alcohol, had one, and independent candidates, four.

ROY COHN, the lawyer who gained notoriety as Senator Joseph McCarthy's right-hand man during the anti-Communist witchhunt in the 1950s, died at the weekend from symptoms commonly linked to Aids.

Mr Cohn, aged 59, died at the Warren Grant Magnuson clinical centre in Bethesda, Maryland, of cardio-pulmonary arrest and of two secondary causes — dementia and HTLV-3 infections. HTLV-3 is believed to be the virus that causes Aids.

NINE suspected cholera cases in Hong Kong led to the British colony being declared a cholera-infected area and there was a rush on vaccination clinics.

THE singer Boy George was fined £250 at Marylebone magistrates' court in London last week for possessing heroin and disclosed later that a $1 million contract had been cancelled by Japanese promoters because of the offence.

Oil price ups & downs

25 dollars per barrel
Actual price
Price in 1973 dollars
20, 15, 10, 5 / 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5
1973, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86

Source: BP. 1973 comparison not available since 1985.

Opec slashes output

By John Hooper in Geneva

OPEC ministers agreed unanimously in Geneva on Monday a proposal from Iran to exempt its Gulf war enemy, Iraq, from output controls on condition that the other members of the organisation reduce their oil production by a total of 3.5 million barrels a day. The deal, if it sticks, will go a long way towards removing the huge surplus of crude which has dragged prices down to their lowest levels in real terms since the early 1970s.

The Iranian oil minister, Mr Gholamrezah Aghazadeh, told a press conference earlier that he had suggested the scheme should run for at least two months, and the Opec ministers would then reconvene to reallocate binding quotas.

He added that the aim of the scheme was to "give a shock to the market," and even before the conference reached a decision, oil prices had shot up by more than a dollar in Europe and more than $1.50 in the US.

The agreement will put paid to the promise of even cheaper petrol, but will come as a welcome relief to the British government, which had faced the prospect of a steadily worsening balance of trade and the threat that its revenues from North Sea oil would not be enough to finance income tax cuts in the next budget.

Although the delegates said they fully expected to leave Geneva with a binding agreement, the conference chairman, Mr Rilwanu Lukman of Nigeria, sounded a note of caution. He confirmed that all the Opec ministers had agreed, but when asked if the deal would be completed replied: "Inshallah" (God willing). Saudi Arabia was said by sources close to the conference to be insisting on the implementation of an official pricing structure.

Iran's daring strategy, tabled at a private meeting of ministers from the 13 Opec states on Sunday night, came only a few hours after the publication of an open letter from the Iraqi President, Mr Saddam Hussein, calling for an end to the six-year Gulf war.

But Mr Aghazadeh's initiative did not appear to be a first move towards ending the conflict so much as an attempt to stem the damage inflicted on Iran's economy and its war effort by the plunge in oil prices. It could yet prove difficult to sell to the Iranian public, but he has nevertheless succeeded in seizing the initiative within Opec and stopping — at least for the moment — the price war encouraged by Saudi Arabia and her allies.

Cruce oil prices went into a nosedive in December when Opec effectively abandoned its 16 million barrels a day production ceiling and embarked on a campaign for a bigger share of world markets.

Iran's lack of export channels has meant that it has been unable to pump more than 2.3 million barrels a day allotted under the old ceiling. Iraq, on the other hand, has been able to take advantage of a pipeline which Saudi Arabia last year allowed it to build through its territory to boost its output to 1.9 million barrels a day compared with an official quota of only 1.2.

'Token' sanctions by PM

By Michael Smith

THE limited package of measures which Mrs Thatcher proposed to the summit would make very little impact on either the British or South African economies and seem destined to strengthen the feelings of "token" sanctions against Pretoria.

Britain's three-part package is to halt new investment, ban the import of coal, iron, steel, and Krugerrands, and to impose a voluntary ban on promoting tourism.

They would cover only a fraction of trade between the two countries, but on a broader scale could close off some world markets to South African goods like steel and coal.

Krugerrands, the coin containing an ounce of gold, are an item covered by existing restrictions, and new investment in South Africa has slowed to a trickle in recent years.

Initial observations were that the Prime Minister's measures would affect only around 2 to 3 per cent of the £2 billion a year trade between Britain and South Africa, and that both countries could find alternative trading partners for some produce.

On the basis of estimates so far, it would be difficult for the Government to support claims of large job losses in Britain as a result of sanctions, but there are some signs that blacks could be affected in South Africa's coal and steel industries.

Coal imports from South Africa make only a small impact on Britain's energy needs, and are not used for domestic purposes. According to the Department of Energy, Britain imported 725,000 tonnes of South Afrian coal last year, worth £40 million and representing less than 1 per cent of Britain's total coal consumption.

But South Afria exports 25 per cent of its 170 million tonnes a year of coal onto world markets, providing jobs for 95,000 non-whites.

Because of the continuing world glut of coal, Britain would have no difficulty replacing South Africa as a supplier, but British mining machinery manufacturers could suffer if South Africa retaliated against sanctions.

The Department of Trade and Industry said that Britain imported a total of £33.6 million worth of iron and steel from South Africa in 1985, which represented a small fraction of domestic needs that could easily be replaced in the current climate of over-supply.

However, iron and steel is a cornerstone of the South African economy, with exports accounting for 44 per cent of production, and the EEC a major purchaser. The industry provides jobs for 70,000 non-whites.

Tourist industry sources were also expressing serious doubts about the effect of any ban on promoting British tourism in the Cape. It is estimated that 186,000 of the 509,000 foreign visits by South African nationals in 1985 were to Britain, while 123,000 British passport holders visited South Africa. Britain remains the second favourite tourist spot for South Africans after Zimbabwe.

Although tourism is an important source of foreign exchange for South Africa, the riots and general political disorder are likely to be a bigger deterrent to holidaymakers than promotional campaigns.

Lange faces nuclear dilemma

By Ian Templeton in Wellington

AS New Zealand seeks to reshape its defence policy after the withdrawal of the US "security guarantee", it was no comfort to the Prime Minister, David Lange, when the Soviet leader, Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, in a speech in Vladivostok sought to emphasise the role of the Soviet Union as a Pacific, as well as a European, power.

The Lange thesis has been, as New Zealand pursues its anti-nuclear policy, that the country enjoys a benign strategic environment and can concentrate on strengthening regional security in the south-west Pacific.

The main thrust of Mr Lange's foreign policy has been to remove the nuclear threat from the South Pacific. He played a leading role in promoting the South Pacific nuclear-free zone treaty on which the sponsoring South Pacific Forum, meeting in Fiji this week, is expected to seek signatures from Britain, the US, and France.

The second and third protocols asks these nations to respect its prohibitions in their South Pacific territories.

The second and third protocols will also be offered to the Soviet Union and China, both of which have indicated they will sign. Those clauses ask that the signatories do not use their nuclear weapons in the zone and do not test nuclear devices.

The US and Britain could vote either way and France is expected to refuse to sign because of its Mururoa test programme.

For Mr Lange, the anti-nuclear diplomacy has several aspects. In other circumstances he might have welcomed the Gorbachev praise for the proposed South Pacific nuclear-free zone. But the Soviet leader was, in fact, declaring his country's interest in the region, and underlining that the South Pacific is as much a cockpit for superpower rivalry as any other part of the world.

Mr Lange has just been handed a report from a committee headed by former Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Mr Frank Corner, reviewing New Zealand's defence policy.

It found widespread support for the government's anti-nuclear stance. The key issue for the Government, however, is whether it succeeds in reconciling that support with the pronounced support for the Anzus Alliance, now declared "inoperable" by the US.

Later this month the Anzus Treaty council will meet in San Francisco, with New Zealand conspicuously absent. It appears that the US will formally assert its security guarantees to the other treaty partner, Australia, and seek to emphasise the revised bilateral nature of the treaty.

Either at San Francisco or on the enactment of New Zealand's anti-nuclear legislation, the US will formally withdraw its guarantee to defend New Zealand against agreession. That will bring to a head the long-running dispute over nuclear warship visits.

It will complicate the task for Mr Lange of persuading New Zealanders that their country has been made a safer place.

Opposition throws down challenge to Zia

By George Arney in Islamabad

AFTER months of inertia and international squabbling, Pakistan's opposition alliance, the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy, has finally found its voice.

At a meeting in Lahore which ended in the early hours of Sunday morning, the MRD challenged the Government to announce elections by September 20 and hold them by end of the year, or face "a peaceful democratic movement". Miss Benazir Bhutto had already threatened to tighten the screw to force fresh elections by the autumn. The next turn of the screw was due on August 14, Pakistan's independence day, when she planned to make an "important announcement" while party rallies were staged throughout the country.

Now it has been agreed that the People's Party and the rest of the MRD will hold joint rallies in Lahore and Karachi on independence day. Since the ruling Muslim League intends to hold a huge public meeting in Lahore on the same day, a showdown has become a real possibility.

Since the MRD was founded in 1981, it has been demanding immediate elections. The agitation it launched three years ago, which was brutally repressed in Sind province by the army, may have helped to convince General Zia that martial law could not be retained indefinitely.

But since martial law was lifted eight months ago, the internal tensions in the alliance have grown worse. The MRD was always an uneasy coalition of parties ranging from the religious right to the revolutionary left, nearly all of them suspicious of the alliance's biggest partner, the Pakistan People's Party.

Many of them were actively engaged in the mass movement which brought down the former PPP prime minister, Mr Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, in 1977 and opened the door to army rule. Only General Zia's tightening grip brought the parties together.

After Mr Bhutto's daughter and political heiress, Benazir Bhutto, returned to Pakistan in April, divisions deepened. Miss Bhutto has been accused, with some justification, of disregarding the MRD. Although she has met individual party leaders since her return, she has not attended a single meeting of the alliance's central action committee.

In turn, she accused the alliance last week of getting bogged down in non-issues. General Zia's position was getting weaker, she claimed, "and we do not want him to gain time to entrench himself again".

Smaller parties, fearful of the PPP's predominance, have fought to turn the MRD into an election alliance with a common programme and a permanent organisation.

Most of a meeting billed as "crucial to the future of the alliance" devoted itself to debate over who should represent one of the splintered leftwing parties.

There have also been allied disputes over whether the MRD should continue to call for the restoration of the 1973 constitution, the only one of Pakistan's many constitutions which was freely agreed by elected representatives from all the provinces. After that constitution was overridden by Mr Bhutto and drastically amended by General Zia, some parties argued that it could no longer sufficiently safeguard provincial rights.

Although not all these disputes have been finally resolved, they were at least put into cold storage at the latest meeting of the MRD's central action committee. The alliance agreed that if any of its components comes to power the constitution would be amended to strip the Federal Government of control over everything except foreign affairs, defence, communications, and currency.

In future, no state of emergency would be permitted to last longer than six months without a referendum in the province concerned. And provinces would be allowed to raise their own armed civil defence forces.

More significant in the short term is the MRD's decision to impose a deadline for fresh elections. PPP leaders who feared the party had dangerously isolated itself by giving a unilateral call for elections are relieved. "Frankly, this is exactly what we wanted," one of them said after the meeting.

Miss Bhutto's own reaction was not immediately known. She was not at the meeting and her deputies had to seek her approval by telephone. Criticising the alliance last week, she said: "Time does not wait for anyone and so we cannot wait for anyone to keep pace with us." But many feel that time is running out for her, or at least for her credibility.

The postponement of her election deadline from autumn to the end of the year is a small price to pay for winning the active support of the rest of the opposition, however little she has sought it.

Private enterprise in Moscow

By Martin Walker in Moscow

JUST beside the Moscow planetarium is a shop which somehow encapsulates the Gorbachev dilemma, how to revitalise this country's economy without dismantling the Soviet system.

It is a kommissioni, or second-hand shop, where the state buys and sells goods and takes a 7 per cent commission. It has also been for many years the focus of wealth-creation and social mobility in Moscow. This is the main kommissioni for electronic goods, from stereo tape decks to video recorders, and it was only when I discovered it that I began to learn how the Soviet system works.

Returning diplomats and officials who had been on foreign delegations would make a bee-line for this place almost as soon as they had cleared customs. The video recorder that cost them £350 in Britain would go on sale here at 6,000 roubles or more. The stereo tape deck or the compact disc system or the Sony short-wave radio would command a proportionate mark-up.

Because of this, the permission for a Soviet citizen to travel abroad was like a licence to print money once they returned. And it was all entirely legal.

And it explained why the apartments of Muscovites who had often been abroad were much more lavishly equipped than those of people, even fairly senior officials who earned nominally far higher salaries, whose duties had kept them in the homeland.

When I first arrived in Moscow, this kommissioni was a thriving place, the counters crowded with people waving thick wads of roubles, and talking knowledgeably in Russian about the difference between Grundig and Panasonic, about Dolby systems and graphic equalisers and freeze frames and playback speeds. The customers knew their stuff.

They also had the right to take an item home on approval for three days to see if it worked properly, before the deal was formally concluded.

All this has changed, since Gorbachev. It began with an experiment in a selected number of kommissioni shops, which has now been extended nation-wide. This permits no secondhand product to be sold for more than the new price of an equivalent Soviet product.

Then it rules that any item unsold after two weeks should be marked down by 20 per cent, and after another three weeks by 30 per cent. The result was to empty the shelves of the kommissioni as people stopped bringing their "second-hand" goods for sale.

But it has not stopped the business, which now takes place on the street outside the shop, or very discreetly through one or two of the more daring assistants who will put buyer and seller in private contact with each other, for a small commission on the eventual deal.

I tried this out the other day, went into the shop and looked at the sadly bare shelves, which contained two rather dowdy Soviet-made video recorders that have been nicknamed "tape eaters". I loitered, then waited in the street outside and a youth in jeans and leather jacket asked me if I were buying or selling.

"Selling a video. Panasonic," I said. It is worth noting at this point the usefulness of the Soviet empire to a foreign journalist. My Russian is far too poor for a Russian-speaker even to think of me as a fellow-national, but the people from the Baltic provinces often take a pride in their terrible mutilations of the Russian language. On a good day, I can pass for a short while as a Latvian.

We established that the video was almost new, that it could play Pal and Secam, and with the promise of throwing in four blank tapes I had an offer of 5,000 roubles in cash. I then made my excuses and left, as they say. At the legal exchange rate, that is almost £5,000.

The trade has not stopped. It has gone private. It has also gone effectively criminal, and the end of that three day approval period means that the entire business is now wide open to fraud.

But there is no sign that any of this black-market activity is reducing. You can find a black market in computer parts and software outside the pioneer shop on Gorky Street, and for electronic goods at the kommissioni shop, and for Western rock music tapes and records at the youth cafe on Leninski Prospect, all operating more or less openly.

It is the old story of supply and demand, and of human ingenuity outwitting the bureaucrat. And while one understands the distaste for the fast rouble that led the Gorbachev administration to clamp down on the kommissioni, one wonders at the lack of imagination that has simply moved the trade to the black market.

Reagan believed ready to bargain on SDI

By Mark Tran in Washington

NEW details have emerged of the "grand compromise" contained in President Reagan's July 25 letter to Mr Gorbachev, proposing a delay in deploying Star Wars in return for a cut in missiles.

In the most extensive account of the letter so far, in Saturday's Washington Post, the President is said to be willing to get down to specifics in bargaining over his Strategic Defence Initiative. While the full contents of the letter still remain under wraps and various second-hand accounts differ in emphasis, willingness to bargain over SDI comes through loud and clear.

Last week an official, talking about Mr Reagan's two-and-a-half page message to Moscow, was quoted as saying: ". . . Whatever they say, the fact is that the bargaining has started on the issue of delaying deployment, on the issue of what is allowable research, on the whole question of SDI."

The US considers Mr Gorbachev's promise to study Mr Reagan's proposals "with responsibility and attention" as encouraging. The pace of diplomatic activity has quickened with the agreement for a meeting between the Secretary of State, Mr Shultz, and his Soviet counterpart, Mr Shevardnadze, in September. Mr Reagan's letter has set the stage for that meeting and the next summit talks.

In the letter, Mr Reagan says that the US would continue for the next five years to research, test and develop Star Wars, "which is permitted by the anti-ballistic missile (ABM) treaty." He did not define what activity would or would not be allowed under the 1972 treaty, nor did he say whether the US would adhere to a narrow or broad definition of the treaty.

US allies have been informed that the letter implied no change in the present restrictive interpretation of the treaty, although there was no pledge that this would continue. According to the Post, Mr Reagan went on to propose that if SDI systems are shown to be feasible by 1991 — a wildly optimistic forecast, say critics — the US and the Soviet Union would then start discussions on how to manage "a transition period" to an era of defence weapons.

The discussions are to last no more than two years and if no agreement is reached, each side could unilaterally proceed with deployment of a space-based defensive system after six months' notice to the other party.

At the insistence of President Reagan, the offer to share Star Wars technology was included in the letter, although this has been almost universally derided.

Until the final stage of drafting, Mr Reagan reportedly planned to propose that the US, the Soviet Union, Britain and France, sit down to multilateral discussions about offensive reductions beyond 50 per cent, when such talks are appropriate. But this was dropped after a strong protest from Mrs Thatcher, who argued that the passage did not reflect British conditions for entering talks about reducing the country's nuclear weapons.

Another idea deleted from the final text, after strong objections from the Defence Department, was a proposal to reduce the number of US underground nuclear tests in proportion to cuts in the number of strategic weapons.

Star Wars is coming under threat from the congressional budget cutters. The Senate and the House of Representatives are moving to cut Mr Reagan's $5.3 billion by between $1.5 and $2 billion. Time is also running out for Mr Reagan who, according to some accounts, is deeply influenced by his wife, Nancy, who wants to secure his standing in the history books.

It has been pointed out that Senate ratification of any agreement would have to take place in spring, 1988, to avoid getting caught up in presidential politics in the autumn.

Venice begins to rise again

By George Armstrong in Rome

VENICE is no longer sinking, and has actually risen above the lagoon's mean level by two centimetres, it has been confirmed.

The image of a sinking Venice has caught the imagination of millions of people who know and love the unique and beautiful city.

But the local branch of Italy's National Research Council has reinforced reports since the mid-1970s that the city's subsidence has halted.

Nonetheless, visitors have seen St Mark's Square standing in between 10 inches to four feet of water this year. The record remains that of 1966, when the square was standing in six feet of water.

A city ordinance, 15 years ago stopped industries in the Porto Marghera area on the mainland from drawing more water from artesian wells. This caused the subterranean water table in the lagoon area slowly to rise to its previous level, ending the subsidence and probably explaining why the city rose above the level at the beginning of this century.

In taking measurements of Venice the Research Council chose the town of Conegliano, in the hinterland, as its reference point. However, Conegliano was bady shaken in the 1976 earthquake in the nearby Friuli region, and the experts had to start again with three other towns.

There are references to the tidal water that regularly covers the lower parts of Venice and not properly considered a flood beginning in the sixteenth century. The first photograph of St Mark's standing in water was taken nearly 100 years ago.

The high water, which causes immense damage to buildings and merchandise, now takes place about 55 times a year, rather than the four or five times recorded in the first half of this century.

The Adriatic sea, which flushes out the lagoon every six hours, has also been steadily rising, and this has been explained by the melting of glaciers in the Arctic. When there is an exceptionally strong east wind as the tide is coming into the lagoon, it drives in more water and Venice is affected.

IN MEMORIAM

WILLIAM WAYNFLETE, Provost of Eton, Bishop of Winchester, Chancellor of England, Lancastrian, and Founder of Magdalen College, Oxford, died August 11, 1486.

Bloodshed on the other side of the razor's edge

David Beresford reports from the Eastern Cape

A FEW miles outside Port Elizabeth — South Africa's "Detroit" — entanglements of razor-wire have been thrown up around a major black township called New Brighton, one of the oldest in the Eastern Cape. The use of razor-wire to seal it off is, in a sense, symbolic of the state of siege under which blacks find themselves in this province — an area which offers a gloomy portent for the future of South Africa as a whole.

The Eastern Cape has long been troublesome to the rulers of South Africa. In the late 18th and 19th centuries the British fought a series of bloody engagements with local tribesmen, the so-called Kaffir wars which reached a climax in the battle of Grahamstown which saw the defeat of the great Xhosa warrior-prophet Nxele.

In the second half of the twentieth century the province has produced the most famous names in the black liberation struggle: Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo and Steve Biko among them. It was in the Eastern Cape that the youth league of the African National Congress was born, which gave a new, militant impetus to the organisation's activities in the 1940s. The defiance campaign of the 1950s was most marked in the area. After the smashing of resistance in the post-Sharpeville era it was again in the province that black rebellion re-emerged with the birth of the black consciousness movement in the early 1970s.

The present bout of unrest began further north, in the Vaal triangle. But again it has been in the Eastern Cape that the rebellion has found its most dramatic expression: in monster political rallies at the funerals of black activists, in the development of an alternative grass-roots political system — township, street and area committees — as well as the launching of the consumer boycott movement.

Recognition of this vanguard role of the Eastern Cape has earned it the most ruthless application of the present state of emergency in the country — a repressive drive in which echoes can be heard of a letter written 174 years ago by the British governor, Sir John Cradock, to the then Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Liverpool: ". . . I am very happy to add that in the course of this service there has not been shed more Kaffir blood than would seem to be necessary to impress on the minds of these savages a proper degree of terror and respect."

The efforts of the present day South African authorities to "impress" the minds of the rebellious are not as bloody, but the principle is much the same. The terror implicit in the razor-wire at New Brighton is reflected in a paucity of information emerging from the townships and the difficulty in making contact with community leaders many of whom — at least of those still on the loose — appear to be spending their lives in a variety of disguises.



Child victim of township unrest, his coffin covered by the colours of the ANC.

A local MP, Mr Andrew Savage, quotes the Minister of Law and Order, Mr Louis Le Grange, as having told him recently: "I am not going to surrender any part of this country to informal government." And while the precise number of detainees is almost impossible to gauge accurately, they appear to have been sufficiently widespread to have effectively destroyed, at least for the time being, black political organisation in the Eastern Cape with the striking exception of the trade unions which, surprisingly, the authorities have left largely intact.

The Progressive Federal Party — the white parliamentary opposition — has a list of what it euphemistically calls "missing persons" (deliberately euphemistic, because it appears to be a breach of the confused emergency regulations to maintain a list of detainees as such), with nearly 800 identified names in the Eastern Cape. On previous experience of the ratio of identifiable detainees to those actually held, this would suggest well over 2,000 are being held in the province.

The "terror" — that feeling which, as one activist described it, accompanies the sound of movements outside one's front door during curfew hours — is not limited to blacks. White liberal homes have been raided and housewives, students, and academics have joined the "missing persons" list, notably in the university city of Grahamstown, which Trollope described in 1877 as "a very pretty little town" and a contemporary traveller, the Rev. William Shrewsbury, as "England in miniature."

The activities of the security forces themselves cannot, of course, be reported under the emergency regulations. But there is a new dimension to security operations which is not subject to reporting restrictions — what are known as "law enforcement officers."

A significant facet of the conflict in other parts of South Africa has been the activities of the so-called "vigilantes," conservative blacks who in many instances appear to have been encouraged by the authorities into conflict with young radicals on a "divide and rule" principle in the Eastern Cape. However, the relative political solidarity of the Xhosa people has not facilitated such tactics. Instead there is widespread use of law enforcement officers — known locally as the "Amachaka" (People of Chaka, the legendary Zulu warrior-king, because many appear to be Zulus imported from Natal).

The Amachaka are security guards recruited to police the townships by the government-established community and municipal councils. The councils themselves, as part of "the system," are highly unpopular — at least 30 out of the 50 established in the Eastern Cape having closed by the forced resignation of members. But their law enforcement officers continue to operate with a particularly fearsome reputation which is illustrated by stories like that of the killing of a boy called Rasta Ndabambi.

Rasta was among a group of youths who were allegedly attacked recently by a group of law enforcement officers on a primitive golf course at Walmer, another black township outside Port Elizabeth. The officers were apparently enraged at the theft of a radio from their vehicle. One of the youths afterwards described, in a sworn affidavit, how the officers opened fire on them as they ran for cover in a nearby graveyard. They were hiding in some bushes when the boy Rasta was spotted by the officers and told to come out.

"When he came out they shot him from about three metres away. They shot him in the stomach. They beat him up and he said sorry and he was crying and bleeding. After they beat him up, another law enforcement police (officer) drew his gun and shot him straight in the head. I saw all this from about 20 metres away." A discussion followed, according to the witness, in which it was suggested a statement would be made to police that the dead youth was a "stone-thrower." The account was supported by a statement from another youth who did not see the killing, but described hearing screaming, two shots, and then silence.

The suspicion that such incidents are being covered up as killings of "stone-throwers" — a phrase regularly used by the Government's Bureau for Information to explain security force killings — is encouraged by another such incident in Walmer township, which was the subject of a Supreme Court restraint action in Port Elizabeth two weeks ago.

The action was successfully brought against Walmer law enforcement officers by Florence Menzi, whose husband, John, had been shot dead. Describing the killing, Mrs Menzi said they were sitting in their home when there was a banging and kicking on the door. She opened it, to be confronted by three law enforcement officers.

"They were all wearing their green uniforms with balaclavas on their heads. I could not recognise any of them because of the balaclavas, but they were all black men. They shouted, asking why I hadn't opened the door and when they saw my husband behind me, they rushed inside the room and began assaulting him. They slapped me as well.

"My husband managed to flee out of the house and run behind the house at the back. They followed him out and I heard two gunshots behind the house."

When Mrs Menzi and neighbours plucked up the courage to go outside they found a trail of blood, but it took her four days to find her husband . . . in the local mortuary. According to the affidavits before the court, the killing was reported by the authorities as that of another "stone-thrower."

But it is not only on the basis of such incidents that the Eastern Cape offers a gloomy portent. The province also provides evidence of what seems to be Pretoria's new philosophic approach — its apparent repudiation of the politics of conciliation, whether in its dealings with the international or domestic communities.

It can be found, for instance, in the handling of the consumer and school boycotts. In Port Elizabeth, where the consumer boycott has been almost 100 per cent effective, repeated appeals by businessmen to central government for help in defusing it have been ignored by Pretoria. The consequences are to be seen in the streets of the city which even under the emergency remains clear of black shoppers.

The attitude of the authorities in the face of such coercive action appears to be that of "the devil take the hindmost." With black unemployment approaching 60 per cent in the Eastern Cape the suffering for the hindmost is inescapable

Similarly, on the schools issue, opportunities for conciliation appear to have been almost contemptuously disregarded by the government. The boycott of schools — over the latest government control measures for children, including the introduction of "school-passes" — has been widespread in this province. But there are comparatively high educational standards among the blacks of the Eastern Cape and there were indications last week of anxiety in the community to settle the issue and get the children back to classes.

Appeals were made to the department of education for a six-day postponement of last Friday's deadline for children to re-register and comply with the new regulations, but the appeals were dismissed. This week the department announced that it was beginning to close schools in the Eastern Cape, transferring teachers and equipment to other areas. With the likelihood that even conforming pupils will now be forced into a sympathy boycott, there are now real fears that the entire school system in the province faces collapse.

Political activists here refuse to accept that the country is facing a repeat of the 1960 crack-down — which effectively crushed black resistance for one-and-a-half decades — arguing that the politicisation of the masses has now gone too far. In conversation they repeatedly drop references to "when the emergency is over" and they ask hopefully what the international community is going to do.

After his defeat at the battle of Grahamstown, Nxele surrendered to the British, having pledged that one day he would return to lead his people to freedom from the whites. He was incarcerated on Robben Island and drowned a year later while trying to escape. His personal possessions were not buried for another half century.

Today there is a phrase used by the Xhosa, "Kukukza Kukka Nxele," which translates as "The Coming of Nxele." It means a forlorn hope. And in their hope that liberation is near, the question is whether black South Africa is once again awaiting the coming of Nxele.

American foreign policy in an intellectual vacuum

By Alex Brummer in Washington

NEARLY six years into the Reagan presidency the making of foreign policy is as bumpy a ride as it has ever been. While the President is still able to work his magic on Capitol Hill with certain issues, such as support for the Contras and arms for the Saudis, about which the differences among his advisers are less pronounced, on the great issues of our time — South Africa and arms control — his adminisration is hopelessly adrift.

On South Africa, where the United States with its modern civil rights history has had a better opportunity than almost any country to take the moral high ground, the Reagan White House has foundered badly. It allowed public hopes to be built on an important shift in policy away from Pretoria and then hatched an address which brought smiles only to P. W. Botha and his apartheid thugs. After the most misjudged speech of his presidency, Reagan and his aides are scrambling to limit the damage.

As if the chaos and infighting over the white laager were not bad enough, the US policymakers have been engaged in an even more divisive struggle over arms control. The result is a letter to Mr Gorbachev which barely disguises the cracks in Washington: at one and the same time it offers comfort to those who support Reagan's cherished Strategic Defence Initiative and those who would bargain it away for a deal on offensive weapons. It thus resolves nothing but barely keeps alive the delicate White House-Kremlin dialogue.

You are Cordially Invited to a White House Foreign Policy Diplomatic Reception
Black Tie
Your Host

In a Washington where Mr Reagan can do no wrong (there is even a movement to do away with the 22nd Amendment and give him a third term in the Oval Office) the search for a scapegoat has been on in earnest.

But the problem with foreign policy in the Reagan administration is the President himself. He has fostered a climate in which each foreign policy issue becomes a fresh battle for the President's mind. As a result decisions, instead of being framed within some grand strategy in the way Kissinger or Brezinski may have designed, are taken in an intellectual vacuum. Each passing decision is seen by his advisers as a chance to reinvent the wheel. So the same ideological struggles which divided the administration in the earliest days of 1981 still persist in the summer of 1986.

The problems are partly systemic and partly personal to Reagan himself. His preference for a collegial type of leadership — sometimes called cabinet government for want of a better term — means that the policy fight is never over until the President puts his initials to the national security directive, speech or statement. Thus the internal politicking continues to the last moment with Mr Reagan apparently unaware that Shultz and Weinberger aren't out on the links together enjoying themselves.

Even on the morning that Mr Reagan delivered his ill-fated South African speech, the Secretary of State, Mr Shultz, was hauled into the White House to verify whether some notes in the margin were his own and should be incorporated (they weren't). The communications director, Pat Buchanan, seizing a last-minute opportunity, slipped in some harsh language about the Communist influence in the ANC.

Such shenanigans are commonplace and those officials with the most staying power and strongest views ultimately win in the end. It is no coincidence that Mr Reagan has had more national security advisers than any of his predecessors. The pressures are so great that the National Security Council has become an administrative maelstrom, where no single person can fight the ideological currents.

Those familiar with the workings of the NSC say that Robert McFarlane, who masterminded the preparation for the Geneva summit and engineered the first concerted Western effort to force reforms on P. W. Botha, was simply worn down by the process. Similarly, Poindexter was so overstretched in recent days that he had little time to look at the domestic political ramifications of the President's decisions. His task was made even tougher when his deputy, Donald Fortier, with responsibilities for keeping his eye on the politics, was taken seriously ill. Add to this the bullying figure of White House chief-of-staff Donald Regan — "You either grovel at Don's feet or have a confrontation," one insider recently noted — and there is a permanent recipe for disaster.

None of this would matter very much if Mr Reagan was a more cerebral President with a world view. But as one foreign policy official told the New Yorker last week: "The truth is that the President doesn't have any foreign policy ideas — except that America should be militarily strong and we should push back communism." He is also mentally lazy and finds it difficult to grasp the more complex issues such as arms control.

His rabid anti-communism explains two recent foreign policy blunders. To the end, long after his advisers had agreed among themselves that President Marcos of the Philippines had to go after stealing an election, Mr Reagan clung to his old friend, seeing him as a bastion against communism. Most recently his fear that the ANC might be a Communist front led him to all but embrace Botha against all the counselling of Mr Shultz.

When it comes to arms control, where the President is least comfortable with the delicate shadings, Reagan is a wayward cruise missile. Even after his administration had publicly abandoned the Salt process, the President went on national television and appeared to reverse a national security directive he had just signed. His protectors in Larry Speake's office of disinformation explained that the President had been confused by a new seating plan for journalists: as if a leader who couldn't read his own cue cards could put together a cogent defence of the Salt decision.

On each of the arms decisions facing the administration in recent days — how to respond to Mr Gorbachev's offer of a grand trade-off; how to deal with a special meeting on treaty violations, and what to do about continued Soviet pressure for a testing moratorium — the administration has been as dangerously split as ever.

Superficially, the peaceniks (if there are such people in this administration) appear to have won. The US went to the violations meeting, it is vaguely talking about a test ban treaty verification, and has come up with an ABM compromise. But none of this really matters unless the President can be convinced to give up SDI, which he genuinely believes can protect the US and the West from incoming missiles.

Mr Reagan hangs on to the ideas that he understands: SDI is safe, communism is bad, and big government is wasteful (even if he has presided over the largest federal expansion in history). Mr Reagan, always portrayed as the crafty negotiator and master politician can never lose: only his advisers can.

Pressure for third term

THE familiar cry of "four more years, four more years" was heard greeting President Reagan last week as he campaigned across the country for congressional candidates.

Mr Guy Vander Jagt, who heads the Republican National Congressional Committee, has introduced legislation in Congress aimed at repealing the 22nd Amendment, which restricts presidents to two terms. "The petition drive" to give Mr Reagan an extra term "has ignited a prairie fire that can sweep across the country," Mr Vander Jagt told a crowded press conference in front of the Capitol.

In recent weeks, Mr Reagan has talked enthusiastically about the need to repeal the 22nd Amendment, which was ironically forced onto the statute books by Republicans fearful that another Democrat might repeat the feat of Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was elected four times before dying in office.

"Shouldn't the people have the right to vote for someone as many times as they want to vote for him?" Mr Reagan said recently, though he maintains that he personally has no interest in a third term.

An open world market for talent

PRESIDENT REAGAN is pushing through Congress a massive tax reduction programme which will send a fiscal tidal wave across the world. If the proposals go through then the top rate of tax in the US will fall from 50 per cent (compared with 60 per cent here) to only 27 per cent. When that happens the meanest billionaire in America will pay less tax on any extra income he receives than low paid manual workers in the UK who now pay 29 per cent before reliefs.

This matters because the world has become an increasingly open market as conservative governments everywhere have dismantled national barriers. Capital — and people — have become more mobile than ever. As President Mitterrand discovered to his cost during France's ill-fated (solo) economic expansion, it is difficult these days to have socialism in one country.

The danger facing Britain and Europe is that the existence of such low top tax rates in the US will trigger an alarming drain of talent. The skills required for today's growth industries (like electronics, information techonology and financial services) are ominously footloose. American companies will be able to pick the cream of Europe's talent by offering much higher salaries and absurdly low (to us) tax rates. And these are the very people a future Labour government will need to produce the extra wealth which is supposed to pay for the improved benefits planned.

It is not necessarily reassuring to know that the Reagan tax revolution is all done by mirrors. He is not planning to reduce the overall burden of taxation at all, merely to redistribute it and remove many of the notorious "tax breaks" — for instance, relief on savings for retirement. Like a schizophrenic Robin Hood he is taxing the pampered middle classes and business corporations more heavily in order to reduce the burden for the richest and poorest tax payers. Businesses will now have to pay tax seriously for the first time in recent memory. They are going along with it because they believe that sales will benefit from a surge of consumer spending induced by lower taxation.

Anyone migrating to the US would, of course, have to pay for many of the services (like health) which is paid here through the tax system. And tax relief on home ownership (including second homes) would remain. It is also possible that the Reagan package will backfire and that, instead of producing an influx of European whiz kids, it will contrive an exodus of US hitech corporations seeking elsewhere the tax breaks denied to them under the new deal. But it must be tempting for other countries to follow the Reagan example and reduce taxes.

It is rightly repugnant to most liberal-minded people to give the rich even more money, especially at a time when poverty is getting even worse. But any future British left-of-centre government will find it much harder to strike the correct balance between wealth creation and its fair distribution. This is particularly so for Labour. The future of socialism in a world increasingly dominated by unfettered market forces needs more thought than end-of-term parliamentary frolics can give it. But it will not go away.

Calling it off in Kabul

MR GORBACHEV has shown that he wants to tackle the sticky questions his predecessors put to one side. From his location, relations with the West are but one of a number. In the same way that he opened up relations with China for fresh reconnaissance in his speech at Vladivostok last week, he will also want to mark the re-entry of the Soviet Union into Middle East diplomacy, from which it has been conspicuously absent for a decade. For that to happen he first needs to extricate himself from Afghanistan where the presence of a Soviet Army to fight partisans (whatever their motivation) is taken by most of the Islamic world as a standing affront.

Shortly before the last round of "proximity talks" between Afghans and Pakistanis in Geneva, the Russians placed Babrak Karmal on the sacrificial altar and Pakistan ought to have been more impressed than it was. He had come to symbolise everything that was wrong with the Afghans' approach to their national unity problem, which is a real problem and will outlast an eventual Soviet withdrawal. The Geneva talks reassembled immediately after Mr Gorbachev's decision (unconditional, it seems) to withdraw six token regiments from the country. The numbers involved and their specialities are not of much consequence, especially as Soviet troops are rotated about every six months and previous troop reductions have been made good later on. What they mean is that Mr Gorbachev is aware that withdrawal has become the last hurdle at the proximity talks.

Although the two sides in Geneva still don't talk directly to one another, the unflagging good offices of the UN mediator, Mr Cordobez, have brought them to the point where almost everything except the timing of withdrawal has been agreed, at least in bold outline. There shall be non-interference in Afghanistan of the kind which the government there alleged, at the time of the Soviet intervention, from Western-supported guerrillas. There shall be international guarantees of the country's independence, and the refugees shall return. On the timing, Kabul says four years. Islamabad says four months, and Moscow chimes in that that is totally unrealistic. But the withdrawal of six regiments need not be read only as designed to impress the Pakistanis and the United States. It also holds meaning for the Afghan government itself. In other words, the government cannot rely on an indefinite Soviet military presence and must make the greater efforts for which the Soviet press has long been calling to broaden the administration.

The origins of the war were murky in the extreme, and owed as much to Soviet attempts to knock sense into an incompetent and strife-torn Marxist satellite as to any ideological or territorial ambition. But the continuance of the war has added new and equally unpleasant dimensions, apart altogether from the great suffering it has caused to those Afghan citizens well outside the political arena. It has kept Pakistan in American favour and has provided the US with a moral cause in the dispatch of arms to the guerrilla movements, all six of them, which may not be agreed on the Afghanistan they they want but can agree to harass the one that is there. It is not yet apparent that General Nabibullah can succeed where Babrak Karmal failed. The Russians have already worked their way through the potential Afghan leadership at a steady rate without yet cementing even the two halves of the Communist Party. They presumably do not expect a pliant state like Bulgaria or Husak's Czechoslovakia, but they do need an identifiable entity to call the Afghan government and one which can demonstrate reasonably wide support among the people. But that is not the entire problem. The international dimension which Afghanistan has acquired needs to be eliminated too. It needs someone to say on behalf of Washington and Islamabad as well as Moscow: We're ready to call it off whenever you are.

Third time Ronnie?

THE MODEST proposal is not, of course, a wholly serious one. Representative Guy Vander Jagt may be chief of the Republican National Congressional Committee, but he is not a big cheese, and his attempts to repeal the 22nd Amendment will get nowhere. The ban on American Presidents running for more than two terms will not be lifted. The spectre of a twinkling Ronald Reagan chuntering on in office into his eighties (and nineties?) will not become somewhat crinkled flesh. Mr Vander Jagt has less revolutionary thoughts in his mind, one may assume. Sucking up to the boss. Putting the wind up the Democrats. Raising early funds from voters who can't read the fine print.

Nevertheless, the future of the 22nd Amendment, is more than a knockabout debating point. It isn't some ancient and sacred decree, but a bit of post-war politicking by Republicans anxious to prevent another Franklin Roosevelt whipping them four times on the trot. And, realistically, it has not operated to the general benefit of the American electoral process. Look closely and that process is a very narrow, constricted timetable. If you want to be President, you have to start running early: in practical terms, almost four years before the election you're aiming at. There are fund-raising plate suppers across the continent to be consumed. There are aides to gather. There is the vital net of ward committees to construct. Today, two-and-a-half years from Ronald Reagan's appointed retirement, we know well enough — on both sides — who seeks to succeed him. There may be a surprise entry or two, yet: but no very surprising ones. Meanwhile the Congressional election clock ticks dissonantly. Any incumbent President (Mr Reagan is no different) faces the mid-term judgment that may strip away much of his power. If the Senate goes Democrat in November, then the President's last two years are doomed to frustration and fundamental impotence. The window of opportunity for things done isn't the fabled first hundred days, when the heart-sinking task of fitting would-be administration bottoms to seats is hardly begun. It comes, briefly, towards the end of the first year and for the first few months of the second, before the demands of the mid-term stump grow too clamorous. That is a potty way to run a great country, and the two-term amendment hems such a timetable still further. It guarantees that Presidents — like Reagan — in their sixth year, are dead in the water from that point on. It means, inevitably, that the most ambitious and commanding politicians withdraw from active service to a President almost at the beginning of his second term (if he's lucky enough to get one) in order to position themselves for next time.

In sum, it would be extremely beneficial to America if the 22nd Amendment went. Particularly beneficial if — as Mr Reagan cheerily acknowledged — he cantered away into the sunset on schedule anyway. Month by month this President seems less of a mortal politician and more of a benign, somewhat befuddled constitutional monarch, presiding over a cacophony of warring advisers. He probably could be elected for a third term if he tried. But that would be as a pure figurehead, reading the anodyne speeches, pumping the convenient hands. America would have to find itself a real political leader down below somewhere to do the work.

That, in some ways, is all rather a pity. Three terms of President would be good for America and good for a political process which needs more time for coherence and reflection, and more honesty in the thought that he'll be around for the bust after his boom. First (when Mr Reagan's gone back to the ranch) actually repeal the 22nd. Then find a man for all seasons.

Figuring things out

ACCORDING to a report in Paris Match, Mont Blanc is four feet higher today than it was when measured by scientists between 1892 and 1894. There can be several feasible explanations for that: climatic change, maybe, or geological evolution. But it would surely be prudent to allow for another possibility: that someone simply got the measurement wrong.

Much the same caution is called for in the face of two recent opinion polls by MORI. The first, in the London Standard, based on sampling between July 18 and 22, under the heading "Maggie closes the gap on Labour," put Labour on 37 per cent and the Conservatives on 36. That, said the commentary, was the biggest shift from one MORI poll to the next in two years. The change could be connected, it suggested, with Commonwealth tension over South Africa, where Mrs Thatcher's opposition to sanctions certainly seemed to have done her no harm. There was nothing in the survey, it added, to suggest that voting intentions had been altered by reports of alleged differences between Downing Street and the Palace.

Now switch to the poll in The Times, based on a sample taken on July 30 and 31. This appeared under the headline: "Boost for Labour after Palace-Thatcher rift." It showed a four point rise in Labour support since the Standard poll and a four point drop in support for the Conservatives — an even bigger shift than the one which had surprised the Standard. "The Government," said the commentary, "has suffered a dramatic loss of support in the wake of the controversy over the alleged rift between the Queen and Mrs Thatcher over South Africa. Another big factor has been growing public opposition to the Government's failure to take a tougher line against South Africa."

MORI has an unviable repututation for getting things right on the night. It was spot on with the 1983 election. And The Times report, which was clearly written with the help of MORI guidance, claims some consistency between these two performances, arguing that the signs of a Tory slump were detectable even when the Standard poll (the one headlined "Maggie closes the gap on Labour") was taken. The last two days of polling for the Standard, according to the story in The Times, had actually produced a Labour lead.

And maybe it's true that the Palace controversy has set the electors rocking around like so many bucking broncos — though, on all the previous evidence, one would hardly have expected that an imagined snub by Mrs Thatcher to the Queen would have set off a sudden stampede in the direction of Mr Kinnock. But it would surely be prudent to allow for another possibility: that someone simply got the measurements wrong. Monitoring public opinion may not be quite so fraught and complex as measuring Mont Blanc, but it can be a hazardous business, where margins of error can sometimes betray the most skilled and assiduous practictioner. The essential rule of the game, which Westminster and Fleet Street honour in theory but rarely observe in practice, is not to get carried away by the result of a single poll.

It is also, while we're at it, unwise to assume without further checking that an issue where the Government has a majority of voters against it will necessarily do it electoral harm. MORI and NOP have both charted the same reaction to government policy on South Africa. People tend to agree with Mrs Thatcher that sanctions are not the answer. But they still don't like the way she is handling the issue. MORI in The Times shows 25 per cent of voters satisfied, and 65 per cent dissatisfied.

Even so, if this issue is indeed damaging the Prime Minister and her party, that could have much less to do with the ordinary voter's responses to President Botha, Bishop Tutu and the rest, familiar television figures though they have all become, than with the impression of division and unresponsiveness which the Government has presented. Doubts about the Government's competence and credibility which set in during the Westland affair could be compounded if this persists. It may be this, rather more than the latest shock news from the pollsters, which will trouble the more level-headed Conservative MPs, sanctioneers and friends of Pretoria alike.

Le Monde ENGLISH SECTION

Minister needs to curb 'trigger happy' police

Eric Laignel, the 23-year-old policeman who shot dead a young motorcyclist, William Normand, 24, in the Paris suburb of Fontenay-sous-Bois (Val-de-Marne) on Thursday last week, is to face charges. He has not pleaded self-defence. Laignel is reported to have broken down and become hysterical when he realised what he had done. Police say they found a pistol and various other objects when they searched Normand's apartment which made them think he was the motorcycle-riding snatch thief who had been sought in the area for the past two years.

The victim's family is firmly contesting the allegations and has engaged legal counsel. The incident happened when Normand, a dental technician, riding a powerful motorbike, ran into a police patrol car and apparently tried to get away by riding the wrong way up a one-way street.

WHEN policeman Eric Laignel drew his gun from its holster he was sure of only one thing: the crash-helmeted motorcyclist he took to be the "snatch thief" was getting away from him by riding the wrong way up a one-way street and that was a serious violation of the highway code. Violation for violation, the policeman landed himself in a far more serious situation by quite plainly putting himself above the penal code. Though he was not acting in self-defence, Eric Laignel fired and killed William Normand with a single shot in the back.

We can imagine the relief felt by Charles Pasqua (Minister of the Interior) and Robert Pandraud (Minister responsible for Public Security) when they heard on Friday the catalogue of crimes that could presumably be laid at the young motorcyclist's door. In its own way the Val-de-Marne prefecture more than jumped the gun on the summary inquiry by announcing William Normand's guilt one and a half hours after the incident. Consequently, it must be pointed out that the only person whose reaction fitted the facts remains the man who fired the gun who, having seen the death of his victim, had an attack of nerves.

In the present case, we are still waiting for Robert Pandraud to be just as firm in honestly condemning such tragic breaches of the penal code as certain police liberties, which he had promised to deal with "unmercifully". The case demands it and the minister knows it well.

Who is better placed than he to be concerned about the development over these past ten years of what are generally known as police "slip-ups"? When he was only director-general of the national police, the most serious accidents were frequently the result of infighting among police services and a lack of self-possession. Spurred on powerfully by the campaign against major armed

By Laurent Greilsamer

robberies, special police brigades began shooting one another up through lack of coordination. We need only recall the "slip-ups" at Charenton in 1975 when an anti-gang squad policeman shot dead a police inspector, and at Fontenay-le-Fleury in 1977 when a policeman died in a hail of gunfire, responsibility for which was laid at the door of Commissaire (superintendent) Boulusset.

Towards the end of the '70s and in the early '80s, on the other hand, there was an increase in "slip-ups" where the victims were immigrants. This is when the expression "crime of an ugly mug" acquired reality. There was the death in 1977 of young Mustapha Boukhezzer, killed by six shots in the back one of them fired with the "barrel pressed into" the body, by Police Sergeant Marchaudon, followed by other homicides and "assaults and injuries". In 1983, a 17-year-old Tunisian who was bending over a light motorcycle was shot in the head by a police sergeant who was subsequently charged with "attempted murder".

A new trend has emerged in the last three or four years, with some policemen not hesitating to open fire, when they are not directly threatened, on persons trying to escape. The shooting incident on the Rue Rossini in 1982 was indicative of this "cowboy" state of mind. A young girl was killed hit by two bullets in the back in the stolen car in which she was travelling with friends. There are resemblances between the death of Loïc Lefebvre less than a month ago (on the Rue Mogador in Paris) and Thursday's death of William Normand: both were characterised by the same haste and irresponsibility. Death for offences which at worst are liable to be taken before a magistrate's court. Death on mere suspicion.

This rapid review shows that police "slip-ups" are not the exclusive property of any particular political Majority. Pandraud is therefore right to deplore the "exploitation of corpses for political purposes." But he would be applauded even more if he had the strength to condemn such killings. A minister responsible for public security has a duty to keep his police in check, at least to remind them that their job is to protect citizens, not to harass them.

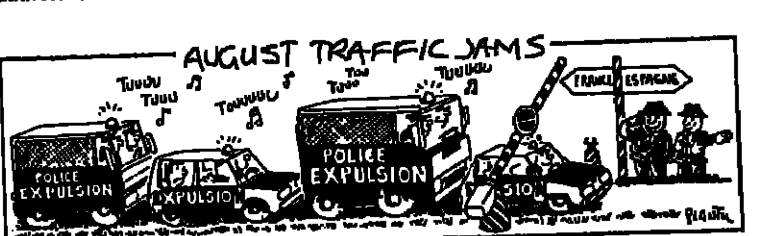
(August 3/4)

Basques face quick return to Spain

France is continuing to pursue its policy of peremptorily extraditing Basques suspected of involvement in separatist activities on French territory. Two more more Basques living in France, believed to be members of ETA, were arrested and handed over to the Spanish authorities this week. A third Basque, who is a political refugee, has been arrested after an extradition demand by Madrid.

Juan Ruiz de Gauna became the fifth Basque refugee to be handed back to Spain. He had been arrested at Anglet less than an hour before his extradition. Like the other four Basques who were expelled ten days earlier, he too had a valid residence permit. The Pyrenées-Atlantique prefecture justified its rapid response on grounds that terrorist attacks were being prepared. Yves Jouffa, president of the League of Human Rights, described the procedure as a "perversion of extradition laws".

Later in the day it became known that another Basque, Koldo Dobaran Urtiaga, had been sent back to Spain in the same summary manner. José Maria Bereziartua, one of 19 Basques who have been granted political refugee status, was arrested and remanded in Pau prison because two extradition warrants taken out by Madrid. The Spanish government has a month in which to forward the file on Bereziartua to French legal authorities.



SOME MEETINGS do not have to be long to be important. French Foreign Minister Jean-Bernard Raimond spent no more than five hours in Madrid on Wednesday last week. His visit confirmed and extended the distinct improvement in Franco-Spanish relations began early in 1984. Before he returned to Paris, the French minister expressed his satisfaction at the excellent climate in which the talks took place with his Spanish counterpart, Francisco Fernandez Ordonez.

This was hardly surprising considering the gestures that Jacques Chirac's government has been making lately. But the fact is that Chirac had his work cut out to calm the fears sparked off by his action as Prime Minister in 1974-1976 and his attitude during the last election campaign. Once firmly opposed to Spain's entry into the EEC, last winter he again called for renegotiation of Spanish membership conditions. Since becoming Prime Minister, Chirac seems to have completely forgotten this part of his election manifesto and even went so far as to stand firmly behind Spain when the United States threatened retaliatory measures against Europe because of the harm done to American agriculture as a result of Spain's joining the Community.

As European policy is a sensitive power-sharing issue on which President François Mitterrand is determined not to overlook any governmental error, Prime Minister Chirac had to make sure the bumbling that characterised his

COMMENT

relations with Chancellor Helmut Kohl of West Germany was forgotten. This is why we are today witnessing the Franco-Spanish dossier being tackled with realism and a spirit of give-and-take. In the circumstances, it will come as no surprise if Spanish Foreign Minister Fernandez Ordonez has grasped the opportunity to bring up two matters in which he is particularly interested.

They are the Community's Mediterranean policy, which Madrid would like to be less favourable to the Magrebian countries whose farm products are in direct competition with Spain's, and the Gulf of Gascony fishing dispute. In the latter case, on the other hand Madrid does not want France to go back on long established practice which allow Spanish trawlers int... zones which French fishermen wish to be reserved for them.

These are not new problems and are a part of the "obsessive tête-à-tete" between France and Spain which has more than once very nearly turned into confrontation. But to overcome this danger Chirac has not backed away from resorting to drastic measures. Proof of that is the series of expulsions of Basque activists who have been living on this side of the border and the arrest, on Wednesday, of a political refugee who the object of an extradition warrant taken out by a Spanish cou...

The question is whether Jacques Chirac and Felipe Gonzalez w... present a united front when the Spanish Prime Minister makes his scheduled visit to Paris at the end of the year. The liberalism of one and the socialism of the other ... not so doctrinaire that, on the f... of it, it will prevent them acting ... tandem.

Constitutional improprieties

By André Fontaine

The Conseil Constitutionnel, which acts as the country's watchdog of the constitutional propriety of legislation enacted by parliament, ruled on July 29 that several major provisions of the new law on the press passed on June 27 were unconstitutional. The Conseil declared that Article 11 of the law on limiting newspaper ownership and safeguarding pluralism in this sphere was unconstitutional. As a result, paragraph 5 of Article 12 which prescribed penalties for the interdictions decreed by the article has been dropped. Article 21 of the new law rescinding the entire decree concerning the organisation of the press in France, dating from 1944, and the law of October 23, 1984 "aimed at limiting press concentration and guaranteeing pluralism and financial openness in press finances" have also been declared unconstitutional.

HOW MANY of the Socialists who expressed satisfaction at Tuesday's ruling by the Conseil Constitutionnel's nine "wise men" on pluralism in newspapers realise what they owe to Valery Giscard d'Estaing and Roger Frey? Yet it was what these two did in 1974 when the former had just been elected President of the Republic and the latter President of the Conseil Constitutionnel that permitted parliamentarians — a minimum of at least 60 is required — to contest the constitutionality of the laws before this supreme body. Until then this was the prerogative of the President of the Republic and the presidents (speakers) of the National Assembly and the Senate.

How many of these same Socialists remember the spiteful declarations that the Conseil's position on the nationalisation issue provoked five years ago? Yet it was then that André Laignel uttered his celebrated remark: "You are legally in the wrong because you are politically in a minority." And Lionel Jospin, First Secretary of the Socialist Party, was quick to affirm that "great reformist movements have never let themselves be stopped by any supreme court whatever".

It is a sign of the times that nobody in the new ruling Majority talks in such terms today. Prime Minister Jacques Chirac, moreover, put a dampener in advance on his own followers' reactions at his July 21 news conference when he noted that France had become "an adult democracy . . . what the Conseil Constitutional decides is by definition legal, and I consider it as such."

Although it means having to seek President Mitterrand's support for his position, the Prime Minister nevertheless considered that "what may be called the system of government by judges should not be allowed to develop." And he added: "Though this is not the case yet, there is certainly a problem that needs attention."

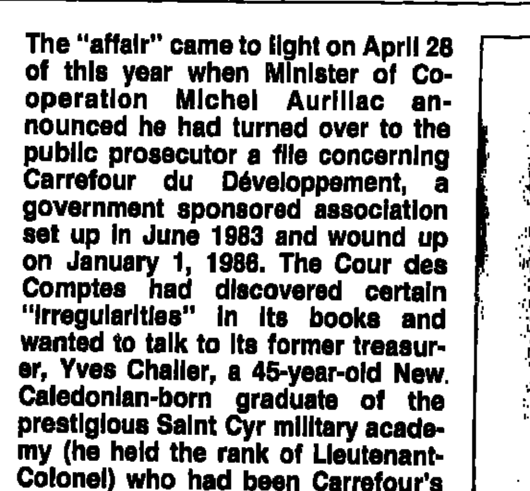
Put in simpler terms, this means that in Chirac's view it is not up to the Conseil Constitutionnel to behave like the Supreme Court of the United States: which it could certainly not do without straying quite a long way from the very spirit of the Constitution it is expected to enforce.

In the American system, it is a question of strictly applying the separation of powers, according to the classic definition provided by Montesquieu in "L'Esprit des Lois": "There are three kinds of powers in every State: legislative power, executive power over matters that proceed from the rights of people, judicial power over matters that proceed from individual rights." The Supreme Court, as its name indicates, is the highest judicial authority. As Bernard Tricot and Raphael Hadas-Lebel rightly pointed out in their work "Les Institutions Politiques Françaises" "Censure by the Supreme Court of the President's or the Congress's acts is not, on the face of it, the exercise of an excessive power exclusively vested in it. What it does by this means the other courts can do at their own level."

Nobody in the United States believes he can question its decisions, even when they encroach heavily on such areas as capital punishment, racial segregation and morals which in America obviously is the domain of the legislature, even when such decisions lead to forcing the resignation of someone like Richard Nixon. The reason for this is that in the view of its founding fathers, the United States was to be subject, unlike the unfortunate countries of Europe, not to a man, a sovereign — a Ruler — but only to the Rule of Law.

The Conseil Constitutionnel, like the Karlsruhe Court, in the

Continued on page 12



Christian Nucci

Light on the Nucci affair

The "affair" came to light on April 28 of this year when Minister of Cooperation Michel Aurillac announced he had turned over to the public prosecutor a file concerning Carrefour du Développement, a government sponsored association set up in June 1983 and wound up on January 1, 1986. The Cour des Comptes had discovered certain "irregularities" in its books and wanted to talk to its former treasurer, Yves Chalier, a 45-year-old New Caledonian-born graduate of the prestigious Saint Cyr military academy (he held the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel) who had been Carrefour's treasurer. Chalier was the head of the private cabinet of Christian Nucci, the Minister of Cooperation in the last Socialist government.

But Chalier had dropped out of circulation and was reported to be in a Latin American country, probably Paraguay, from where he kept issuing statements through his lawyer. He even sent a handwritten but unsigned letter to Aurillac which was deposited in his ministry's letter box. The letter, written in the third person, explained: "After March 16, Yves Chalier went to Israel for a week's holiday. On his return, he discovered he had misappropriated F10 million." In the letter he implicated his former boss Nucci, and Louis Mermaz, the speaker of the National Assembly in an alleged misuse of public funds for political purposes. Chalier went further. In a later interview with Figaro Magazine he implicated others. Nucci has filed a suit, so have half a dozen other persons whose names have been dragged into the case.

Nucci claims the signatures on cheques which he is said to have signed authorising the use of public funds for dubious purposes are forgeries. He says he has unearthed ten more cheques for a total sum of about F400,000. In this interview he explains how his election campaign was financed and rejects Chalier's allegations.

Christian Nucci talks to Françoise Chipaux and Corine Lesnes

QUESTION: You have just said that you have obtained further documents proving large-scale misappropriation of funds. Can you be more precise?

Nucci: They are cheques made out to me and endorsed with falsified signatures.

These cheques — for a total of F400,000 — come from the bank accounts of Carrefour du Developpement and La Promotion Française? (La Promotion Française was founded on March 27, 1985: there were three people on its board — Yves Chalier; Marie-Danielle Behisson, 35, head of cabinet (now suspended) of the Cher prefect and former head of the cabinet of Yvette Roudy, Minister of Women's Rights in the Socialist government; Lucette Norbert, a 71-year-old clairvoyant.)

Yes.

The cheques were made out to you. You have already declared that you never went to the bank to cash them. Were they put into your personal account?

Certainly not. None of these cheques were put into my personal account.

So, what became of them?

Some of them were probably put into the joint account (Nucci and Chalier had a joint official account).

Did you hear of funds transiting through your joint account?

I've begun to see them. These movements of funds amount to about F2 million, which is far short of the figures being bandied about.

This account was kept supplied out of the Matignon's secret funds (the prime minister's office). Was it also supplied by Carrefour du Developpement and La Promotion Française?

That ought not to have happened, unless perhaps if these cheques — with my signature forged on them — were paid into it.

Can you say what your election campaign in the Isère cost and who financed it?

My campaign cost around F400,000. One part of it was financed by the reimbursement I had to make and the other by the firm OFRES which agreed to provide "technical support".

OFRES gave its support without asking for anything in return?

Without anything in return. Financing of election campaigns by private firms is very common. I hope things are clear now. Let people clean up their own messes. It's normal practice in an election campaign. In any case, no public funds went into my election campaign. As far as OFRES was concerned, my role was limited to asking my printer (who printed his election literature) to get in touch with this firm (so he could be paid).

When you asked the treasurer of the Parliamentary Socialist Party for an advance to pay off the printer, did you explain to him the circumstances of the request?

I asked a Socialist group for help to settle a debt. I didn't give any other explanation and I didn't need to.

M Chalier declares that a number of meetings were financed by Carrefour du Developpement.

Listen, M Chalier's behaviour is odd, paradoxical and suspicious. He sends a note which I still haven't read and which implicates me. In his interview he implicates other political figures, on both right and left. Everything M Chalier writes and says is believed. I say, if that is the truth, why did he leave? Why choose a country which has no extradition treaty with France? Finally, I raise questions about the circumstances of the interview.

He talks of a meeting that cost F300,000.

What meeting? He's lying. In a campaign such as the one I led, public meetings are usually held in halls which are lent free of charge. In rural *communes*, you are received into the mayor's office . . . Why is M Chalier lying? Hasn't there been some purpose behind all this from the beginning?

As the "scandal" which some have so eagerly awaited has died down, as the Socialist Party has nothing to do in this affair, attempts are being made through M. Chalier (or Chalier himself is endeavouring) to involve many public figures.

Were the meetings referred to by Chalier really paid for by Carrefour du Developpement?

The figures given concerning the various meetings held in Beaurepaire (Nucci's constituency) or elsewhere are utterly false. Some of the expenses were paid by Carrefour du Developpement — they concerned operations to make the public aware of development problems.

There were two visits by African ambassadors. Contrary to what M Chalier says, the one in 1983 was paid directly by the Ministry of Cooperation. The one in 1985 cost a little more because it had been organised at the same time as a week of activities at Beaurepaire with African craftsmen working in the *commune*. The operation cost about F400,000, not counting the cost of travelling to Sainte-Cécile-les-Vignes. This is nothing like the figures put forward by M Chalier.

And the festivities?

I used the anniversary of my appointment as minister to bring together the people of the region and, through a show or an exhibition, to make them aware of the problems of development. On December 8, 1985, we received a delegation of Algerian politicians. Who better than Carrefour du Developpement could finance such activities? That was precisely its aim.

M Chalier also says there was a video training course that cost F700,000.

It's totally false to say the course cost F700,000. True, with a view to presenting the "Projects Exchange" initiative, we decided to include an introductory course in audiovisual communications, for I had to go round France and appear on regional television shows to talk about the project. We also published several thousand copies of a brochure. It was well produced, and that obviously cost money.

The other point in M Chalier's "list": the invitation of some 60 Beaurepaire residents to Paris.

We thought it was a good thing that municipal employees and councillors should be informed of France's foreign policy. Frankly, I'm not the first minister to organise a trip of this sort.

It was an operation that cost F72,000, F14,000 of which was paid by the Beaurepaire Municipal Employees' Association. The way in which M. Chalier presents this trip is intolerable, totally false. These people stayed in Paris from Sunday evening to Monday evening. They visited the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of Cooperation and the National Assembly where they had a meal. They returned by the TGV (high-speed train).

What about the helpers seconded for work at Beaurepaire and paid by Carrefour du Developpement, according to M Chalier, and the apartment on the Avenue de La Bourdonnais (in Paris), the rent for which is supposed to have been taken care of by Carrefour?

Nobody was seconded for work at Beaurepaire. My helpers were never paid by Carrefour du Developpement. ... apartment, I know it existed. ... for the ... I never rented an apartment personally.

In the interview he gave Figaro Magazine, M Chalier says in connection with the Bujumbura (Burundi, 1984) Franco-African summit, that security personnel had to be sent over to cope with Libyan threats. Who were these agents?

What I found out was that the matter had been settled with the department responsible for official visits.

Mercenaries could also have been sent to the spot?

Not as far as I know. A whole infrastructure had been set up with the help of the Service de Cooperation Internationale de Police (SCTIP).

M Chalier says that government employees were paid in cash under the table.

I'd be surprised that public employees agreed to that.

Finally, it should be known that the cost of this summit — about F65 million — is roughly what France spends in Burundi every year.

Is it true you asked M Chalier to go and explain things to the Secretariat of State for the Budget when the Customs services tipped off M Emmanuelli (Budget Minister under the Socialists)?

I sent him to answer a summons from the director of M Emmanuelli's private cabinet. I didn't hear any more about it.

When were you told of it?

On February 11 or 12 the Cour des Comptes informed the head of my cabinet that he was going to look into Carrefour du Developpement because large sums of money had passed through the association. We were happy the step was being taken, thinking that the entire associative system gravitating around the Ministry of Cooperation would benefit from it. If I had got wind of any embezzlement, do you think I'd have been stupid enough not have been worried or taken precautions?

You were aware of the meeting that President Mitterrand granted M Chalier on April 15?

I heard of it later.

Afterwards, M Mitterrand received me and asked for explanations and told me to follow up the case.

How did a large number of records happen to be found by the PJ (Crimininal Investigation Department) in premises rented by M Chalier?

They were cabinet records and personal papers. In fact, the day after March 16 (the elections) I had no office in Paris. The records had been stored in an office M Chalier had. I had no reason to distrust him at the time.

Afterwards I asked him to take the records sought by M Aurillac to the Ministry of Cooperation.

Do you feel you have been "trapped"?

I think everything today prompts me to think that my confidence has been abused, that M Chalier took advantage of his position, his functions and his power to misappropriate funds, unknown to me.

You spoke of political exploitation . . .

Scraps of information have been made public over the weeks. It seems to me there is an attempt to turn this case into a summer serial. Right from the beginning, there was a determination to mount a political operation, a determination to get at the Socialist Party, highly placed figures and myself. Why, and who is doing it?

Moreover, it seems to me there is an attempt to get at prominent figures in the Isère *departement*. Everybody is agreed that I'm solidly entrenched in my constituency and that I get full support in my *commune*.

In any case, I'm getting expressions of sympathy from the left and the right. I have very good friends, including friends in the world of politics.

(August 1)

Constitution

Continued from page 11

Federal Republic of Germany and similar institutions in Austria, Italy, Spain and Greece, has a far more limited role than the US Supreme Court: apart from verifying the legality of elections and, where necessary, the application of Article 16 which grants exceptional powers to the Head of State in the event of a crisis, its job is basically to keep a check on whether legislation is constitutional. This is a substantial innovation in our country, where until 1958 there was no such body in existence, since the Senate's authority in this area as recognised by Bonapartist constitutions may be regarded as purely formal.

Even after 1958, the separation of powers took time to become fact. De Gaulle's respect for the judiciary's independence did not stop him from abolishing the Military High Tribunal by decree because it was guilty of having refused to sentence General Salan to death, and replacing it with a military court of justice in such conditions that its presiding judge, General de Larminat, committed suicide shortly afterwards.

Nonetheless, the Conseil Constitutionnel has from this time been playing a positive role in safeguarding fundamental liberties. Although the appointment of its members by the President of the Republic and the Presidents of the two Assemblies brought the Conseil into ideological line with the State until 1981, it has frequently met the Opposition's approval. Inevitably though, it did much more once the Opposition's political colour changed. The fact remains, however, that by confining itself to its fundamentally juridical role it has all the same facilitated the work of Francois Mitterrand and Gaston Defferre who fortunately did not feel he should question the institutions.

The appointment of Daniel Mayer as its president, and later of Robert Badinter, as well as the replacement of many of its members have not made it change course, and a careful reading of last week's ruling will uncover little to fuel the Prime Minister's fears about a "government of judges". Indeed, contrary to Socialist expectations, the Conseil refused to take sides on the wisdom of the ceiling of 30 per cent of the market that the law placed on the ambitions of press groups. It merely observed that the article on this point was so drafted it could be legally circumvented and it was this provision that it ruled unconstitutional.

In the circumstances, one can only agree with Louis Favoreu who says that while the Conseil

Continued on page 14

Mules is the name given to Colombians who transport cocaine from one country to another for the Mafia. Bogota newspapers recently revealed how these carriers are recruited and how they transport their cargoes.

'Mules' find a captive market for Colombia's deadly 'snow'

By Charles Vanhecke

BOGOTA — A young woman has no money. She is unemployed, has debts or a sick relative whose hospital bills she cannot pay. One day a man calls out to her from a car as she is walking in the street. He says he knows everything about her — her name, address, family and financial difficulties — and that he could help her. It's a very simple job and well paid: to take a trip to Paris (or Rome or Madrid) and make a "delivery". Air fare and hotel expenses will, of course, be all paid by the sponsor. Once the job has been done, there were $1,000 to $2,000 to be earned.

Many do not resist the prospect of making such money, although it is small change compared with the value of the "cargo". The mysterious stranger — he does not reveal his identity or gives a false name — takes care of everything: passport and air ticket. Then he delivers the goods — dozens of white balls the "mule" has to swallow. Three days before the journey, she has to stop eating. "You have nothing to worry about. Once you arrive, you take a taxi to this hotel. There you will wait until someone comes for you."

Many such mules do not return from their trips. They are immediately spotted at the airports where the police let them through to find out their contacts and then arrest them. If you are a Colombian, and you look haggard and have a new passport, that is enough to raise suspicions. After three days with nothing to eat and a night on the plane — apart from the anguish of having the drugs in your stomach — it's hard to look your best. The appearance is pale, worn out and the hands tremble. If, on top of that, the "mule" has taken pills to combat travel sickness (as a precaution against inopportune vomiting), her mouth will be dry, her eyes feverish and her heartbeat irregular.

At Madrid airport, the police subject suspects to X-rays. At Orly and Roissy, trained dogs sniff luggage for the powder that may be concealed in the false bottoms of suitcases. One hundred and twenty Colombians were picked up in this way in France, and a similar number in Spain. Among them were students, business people and even a former priest. Nearly all of them had agreed to do the work because of financial problems. Carriers are most frequently recruited in the street or by telephone. But there are other methods.

Business people and industrialists who have hit a bad patch are suddenly offered unexpected help. Then one day the generous partner asks for repayment. But he does not want money, just a "small service" — transport something to Europe or the United States.

The daily El Tiempo, which published an investigation into the problem in June, explains that not all the "mules" are voluntary. There are also "blind mules" who are not aware what they are carrying. The newspaper cites the case of a particularly gullible 21-year-old Colombian woman, now serving time in the Fleury Mérogis gaol in France, who thought the 65 white balls she was made to swallow were "emeralds". The man who buttonholed her in the street explained to her: "I have to send some emeralds to Paris, but there are too many to take with me. So, as I don't want to pay any taxes, I'll have to hide them."

The other case related by the newspaper is about a young woman who fell in love with an Italian at Carthagena and agreed to go with him to Rome. As they were about to leave, the Italian asked her to take with her a "flask of deodorant" for which he had no room in his suitcase. When the plane stopped at Madrid he got off, saying he had some business to settle in Spain and promising to join his girlfriend in a few days. The woman was spotted at Rome airport. The police searched her luggage and found the "flask of deodorant" which was stuffed with cocaine. She was given five years in gaol. She could not prove she had been duped.

Apart from the "blind mules", there are also "sacrificial goats" — people the Mafia send out to be caught with the drug in their stomachs so as to divert attention from the real "cargo". In the same plane as the inexperienced "mules" who have fasted for three days and possess revealingly new passports there are soberly turned out people looking like businessmen who have every possible alibi and without any fuss carry the cocaine through customs in their hand luggage.

The "mules" were the inspiration behind Colombian director Ciro Duran's first feature film. Duran became known in 1981 with a short film on the young children who live in the streets of Bogota. This time, in an American co-production, he has chosen to recount how a young girl serving in a bar decides, out of love, to become a "mule" on a trip to the United States. At first called "Cocaine Cowboy", Ciro Duran's film was later given a more poetic title by the American producers — "Tropical Snow". "Snow" which is a good subject for a film in the US.

There is another drug in Colombia which has been worrying the authorities in recent years. It is bazuko, a mix of cocaine, kerosene, ether, sulphates and other chemicals. The bazuko is smoked and gets its name from the bazooka: its effect is instant and violent. The high it produces lasts only a few minutes. And to keep it up, the smoker keeps lighting one cigarette after another. Then comes the depression.

The bazuko owes its popularity (one quarter of Colombians smoke it and 5 per cent are addicts) to its cheapness. But the fact is, it eventually ends up being just as expensive a habit as any other drug, for the anxiety it causes leads to the addict chain-smoking them. A few months ago the weekly La Semana revealed that regular private bazuko clubs have sprung up in Bogota's trendier neighbourhoods. Chic women and dapper executives are the usual clients of these clubs which are in the back rooms of restaurants or even in private residences equipped with leather-upholstered furniture and staffed by gracious waiters who take the tobacco out of cigarettes and fill the space with the drug. To heighten their sensations, the smoker sips a whisky from time to time.

The bazuko is marketed in a "democratic" way, as Colombian television showed recently. It is openly sold in the heart of the capital. All you need is to show your money to buy it. An Indian women hawking chewing gum and cigarettes on the pavement would sometimes leave her stall and walk up and down. The drug is hidden in her "ruana" (Colombian poncho). The buyer will accost her and walk on, the deal having been conducted very rapidly.

Police keep watch in the district. TV reporters staked out in vantage points in a building have seen them quietly tipping off the Indian women selling bazukos before a swoop.

(July 26)

Fire turns the hillsides of Provence into a 'desert'

By Guy Porte

NICE — One of the most beautiful sites on the Côte d'Azur was devastated in a matter of hours on Sunday, July 27, by a forest fire that leapt over cliffs and galloped down slopes in a fury all the way from La Turbie to Eze. On this warm and sultry Sunday afternoon people flocked here with their families to contemplate the disaster.

The lush *garrigue* with its stands of pines and oak has given way to a landscape of loose grey and blackened stones from which wisps of smoke were still rising. A desolately commonplace spectacle of ridges burnt to a cinder, shattered trees, ghostly coppices and telephone poles gnawed by flames.

The forest fire has not only caused destruction, it has also brought to light the garbage hidden by nature — the tins, bottles and rubbish of every sort dumped by roadsides. Insult added to injury. Here and there, the fire has spared a hilltop or valley bottom which have retained their finery amid a sea of desolation. Sometimes also the fire barely singed the tops of pines and swept by beneath their needles.

At Eze, it circled around this village perched on a rocky outcrop and swept through most of the *commune*. For 77-year-old André Gianton, who has held the office of mayor of this village without interruption for the past 39 years, the disaster is terrible.

"We'd worked like Trojans to beautify this little corner of ours," he tells the endless stream of journalists coming to see him. "Given such a disaster, I don't know what to say. It's terrible, terrible . . . We're not going to give up. We'll begin again, but I won't be around to see the *commune* become green again. I don't even know whether the younger generations will witness it. There's so much to do. We'll need considerable resources . . ."

It is when you go towards the Rovère, one of the fortifications overhanging the Grande Corniche, that the full extent of the disaster hits you. "The fire reached here early in the evening," a villager said. "It just did what it wanted."

The thick walls of the fort, where a detachment of the Chasseurs Alpins was stationed until 1981, served as a barrier to the flames which swept over its grassy terraces, but all the slopes around have been blackened and stand out against the backdrop of a blue sea.

The odd rambler would look around and turn back. "On Sunday there were plenty of people here as always," said one. "Now, nobody is going to come round for a long time."

The fire has also almost completely destroyed the Grande Corniche's *departmente* park to the west of the Eze pass where major reforestation had been carried out in recent years. A National Forest Board hoarding, standing at the entrance to the Plateau de la Justice on the old Roman road leading to it, warns (now rather incongruously) in four languages that "the forest is fragile" and "vulnerable to fire". You walk past a copse and then it is the desert.

More than 1,100 hectares have gone up in smoke along the ten kilometres of hillside going from the Eze pass to the Tête de Chien overlooking Monaco. The hill is really disfigured. But another fire to the east took on even more serious proportions. Some 2,200 hectares were destroyed by the flames in the Berre-les-Alpes, Bendejun and Contes *communes* and in the two valleys of the Paillon.

At Berre, a picturesque village built on an overhanging promontory with the ruins of an old feudal castle towering over it, the mayor, Maurice Lavagna, also totted up the damage done. The *commune's* magnificent 200-hectare public forest has been heavily affected. In this case, the fire completed the damage done by frost in the past two years by destroying the mimosas and attacking the stands of Aleppo pine, holm oak and maturing oak trees. This small resort and residential village north of Nice will, like Eze, be binding its wounds for a long time to come.

"People are speaking of an eco-disaster," says Henri Marotti, head of the National Forest Board's Alpes-Maritimes office. "But if the present appearance of the fire-ravaged zones is impressive, it won't stay that way. A part of the landscape will be fixed by nature itself. In areas where tree seeds have not disappeared, natural regeneration will take place. It's still too early to say what will happen. Everything will depend on the weather between now and the autumn. If torrential rain bleaches the soil it will be awful. If, on the other hand, the rain is moderate or the drought does not continue through the summer, herbaceous vegetation will sprout again and bind the soil together."

The *garrigue* will grow again, as it did after previous forest fires. Rockroses, mastic trees, myrtle and gorse will once more cover the steep rocky slopes. Oaks too will produce shoots. But foresters dread the appearance of highly inflammable species. "They're veins of powder liable to blow up at any moment," pointed out Didier Dumay, Forestry Commission engineer and head of the fire-fighting section. Whatever it is, the forest will have to be replanted and at a minimum cost of F15,000 per hectare the bill is likely to be quite steep. Too steep.

What is more, nature cannot be ordered about. In the dry, mid-hillside zone an Aleppo pine grows only an average of one millimetre a year. Cedars, which are being considered for reforestation on a certain scale, grow faster and spread more easily. But it takes decades to obtain a plantation that is interesting from a landscape viewpoint.

So the eastern part of the Cote d'Azur has suffered aesthetic and ecological damage that will last for a long time if not for ever in some parts. Tourists will not stop coming to the the "eagle's eyrie" of Eze. But many of the tourist development projects are now likely to be reviewed.

(July 29)

Letters to the Editor are welcomed but not all can be acknowledged. We don't like cutting them but sometimes this is necessary to get them in the page — short letters stand a better chance. Send them to The Guardian Weekly, PO Box 19, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 1DD England.

Cheese — bring back the 'old stinkers'

By La Reynière

CHEESE is one of the oldest foods known to man. Dr Alfred Gottschalk in his "Histoire de l'Alimentation et de la Gastrononuie depuis la Préhistoire jusqu'à Nos Jours", tells us that neolithic man, by putting curds in wooden receptacles and constantly topping them up with new curds as he consumed the old, was able to keep up a constant supply for a whole season. This practice is still found in remote parts of Central Europe, and was common in Normandy up until the first world war.

Cheese is an almost complete food which contains virtually everything the body needs in order to grow, and has always been regarded as an important source of energy. One could quite happily live off a diet of bread and cheese. Or to be more precise, one used to be able to do so when bread was wholesome and cheeses were still made on the farm.

That noted cheese expert, Pierre Androuët, put his finger on the problem: "It was man's living conditions and the sociology of the land which determined the shape and size of cheeses. We shall never know how much patience, how much trial and error went into perfecting their manufacture. That humble farmers' wives and silent monks should have succeeded in doing so down the centuries is very much to their credit."

No wonder, then, that at one time there were no less than 400 varieties of cheese in France. Hence the celebrated quip: "A people that has created over 400 cheeses could never disappear", claimed to have issued from the mouth of Winston Churchill, but also attributed to Jean Cocteau and, by fervent Gaullists, to Charles de Gaulle (a variant being "How can a people with over 400 cheeses be governable?")

So where are the cheeses of yesteryear? Why do the French seem to be eating less and less cheese, or even, in the case of really pungent varieties like Epoisses, Munster, Maroilles and Vieux Gris de Lille (known as *"le vieux puant"*, or "old stinker") almost none at all?

At least that is the impression I get in restaurants, where there is no mad rush for the cheese platter (for some restaurateurs feel they have to serve a well-stocked platter, even if they lose money on it, instead of just two or three well-ripened seasonal cheeses).

Restaurants also tend to drop the cheese course from their set menus, much to my annoyance. My campaign against menus which allow you "cheese *or* dessert" may have had some effect, but I am fighting a losing battle: there is no lack of "one-eyed" set menus (Jean-Anthelme de Brillat-Savarin said that a meal without cheese was like a pretty girl with only one eye).

But perhaps waning interest in cheese has something to do with the fact that the product now has less and less taste. Here, as with any food, the consumer's appetite is forced to depend on legislation and tax regulations which encourage industrialisation and mass production.

It is also too easy for the big dairies to claim that international regulations force them, as exporters, to use pasteurised milk in their cheeses. The fact is that a pasteurised cheese is a dead product.

If foreign markets like sterilised French cheese, that is their business (apparently, they already import almost 300 tonnes of it a year). But why on earth should the French consumer be forced, by a barrage of television commercials and special cut-price offers, into buying such tasteless pseudo-cheeses? The craft of genuine cheese-making should be encouraged.

We are told that the skills have died out, or that farmers' children prefer to go and work in factories. But surely it is the mechanisation of production methods which is responsible for destroying the empiricism and satisfaction inherent in the skilled cheese-maker's art?

It appears that the French agricultural researchers at INRA are worried about the current trend. May I be permitted to say that I am worried they are worried, lest we end up being force-fed with produce that is profitable but has no character. After all, they were responsible in the past for foisting insipid potato varieties and Golden Delicious apples on us.

Cheese-making standards are already plummeting: Sainte-Maure, the log-shaped goat's milk cheese with a straw through its middle is now made by machines with deep-frozen curds; Camembert, now made anywhere, instead of just in Normandy, has the taste and texture of plaster; another goat cheese, Picodon de Saint-Agrève, does not always gets its mandatory sousing of eau-de-vie before being wrapped in clematis leaves and stored in pots; "Swiss" Gruyère is made in France; most Port-Salut cheese was never made in a monastery (to do so, it must be called Port-du-Salut).

No doubt it is these spurious products which have ended up by putting off cheese fans. It could also be that their soft consistency and blandness have deformed people's palates, with the result that they recoil, instead of salivating, at the whiff of a really smelly cheese.

Most cheese shops are not really interested in the problem. They are just middlemen between the factory and the consumer. And restaurateurs — even those who make a big thing of personally "going to market" and who are very fussy about the quality of other produce — usually accept their suppliers' cheese deliveries without even examining them.

Yes, I know dairy-produced cheese is cheaper to make. But it is less nourishing and beneficial. Medical experts are of the opinion that cheese is a food that can be eaten at almost any age and in any physiological state. Moreover, protein-packed cheese can usefully replace meat in the diet, and is less expensive.

It would be nice if the INRA researchers succeeded in their avowed intention of "optimising the production of cheese without changing its taste". But I would prefer to trust the farmers and their wives, who make cheese the traditional way. I only hope that their children will be able to make a decent enough living out of cheese-making to follow in their footsteps.

Cheese is enhanced by wine — that is why winegrowers sometimes offer little cubes of cheese when a potential buyer is sampling their wares. But a really great bottle can be ruined by the wrong cheese. It is very important to marry the right cheese with the right wine.

The great Belgian food and wine expert, Robert Goffard, has some good words to say on the subject: "Cheese puts great wines to sleep, and awakens good wines. The lactic aggressiveness of certain cheeses, however much one may like it, does not go well with a great vintage that has been properly aged. All the nuances which the passage of time has succeeded in extracting from a monolithic substance become characterless; the various strands of the wine's flavour become indistinguishable from one another; and its 'length' in the mouth withers away.

"Yet it is a great pleasure to round off an excellent meal with a selection of cheeses. My own platter is very simple, and consists of a farmhouse Reblochon or a Vacherin when it is the right season, a Murol when it is creamy and not overripe, a young Cantal or a Fourme d'Ambert. They are all relatively discreet in character, and each of them, while having its own structure, can be washed down by the same wine.

"But the true cheese-lover will prefer a whole meal consisting solely of different cheeses. Some of them have to be accompanied by a white wine — generally speaking a dry one with goat cheeses and a semi-dry one with blue cheeses. All other cheeses require a red wine, with one exception: the ones with the biggest kick should be drunk with vintage port."

I shall have to take Goffard for a meal at Lucas-Carton, where Alain Senderens's menu comprises a "palette" of four cheeses accompanied by four different libations. The combinations vary depending on the time of year, but at my last visit I started with a still young goat cheese and a dry Loire white, and rounded off my "palette" with a tangy Epoisses and an old *marc de Bourgogne*. Needless to say, none of Senderens's cheeses has ever seen the inside of a dairy.

Retrospective of film erotica

By Colette Godard

ONE of the more unusual events of this year's Avignon festival was a retrospective showing of film erotica. In the course of his work as a film historian, Jacques Robert discovered that "pornography" was a genre which the cinema tackled very soon after its invention. And, he felt, if that was the case, why ignore the phenomenon?

Originally, Robert and his collaborator Christian Belaygue thought of showing an anthology of French porno films made since the current legislation covering such films — which is tolerant but highly regulatory — was brought in by Valéry Giscard d'Estaing in the mid-70s.

It was a daring but quite impractical idea. Cinema circuits showing X-rated movies are strictly organised, closely supervised, and heavily taxed. For that reason, such films are made on extremely low budgets. For maximum profitability, once they have had their first run they are often carved up, and their "best" bits inserted into new films.

So the only films available would have been those currently on release. And there seemed little point in going to the bother of getting special permission to show Avignon festival-goers the movies they could see anyway in ordinary cinemas.

"We wanted to update the history of the cinema, of all types of cinema," says Belaygue. "So we adopted another criterion: clandestinity. Up until the present law on X-rated films, all porno films were made and shown behind closed doors.

So with the help of Raymond Borde, who is curator of the Toulouse Cinémathèque and treasurer of the FIAF (Fédération Internationale des Archives de Films), they managed to gather together various forbidden films from archives all over the world.

Until 1946, when they were closed down in France, brothels were a major market for such films, which were shown as part of the evening's erotic entertainment. Afterwards, they disappeared in limbo. Some of the movies perhaps ended up in the Police Museum (and are therefore inaccessible); others were destroyed: others again were sold through specialised magazines or at auctions.

They therefore belong to collectors, who tend to sit on their treasures and be reluctant to share their pleasure with others. Some such collectors, however, did agree to lend their movies to the festival. They brought them to Avignon personally and took them away again incognito.

Such a voyeuristic art as the cinema has always had a penchant for sex. The first filmed kiss was in 1898 — but the actors' lips only just touched each other.

Robert and Belaygue were interested not in showing hard-core sequences from '60s underground movies made by champions of sexual liberation, but rather in putting porno films into historical perspective.

In most cases, they are of little artistic worth. Then, as now, they were filmed quickly and in slapdash fashion. The content is always the same, but the form has changed over the years. Actresses used not be to be as slim as they are now, of course. And the whole attitude to the subject matter was different in the early days.

"The movies we chose from," say the organisers, "which date mainly from the '20s and the '30s, are much jollier than their present day equivalents. There is something of the sauciness of the café-concert and music hall. In music hall comedy, scenes like 'Her wedding night' would show the bride with her nightdress on. Here she takes it and everything else — off. But the films have the same style: they are reminiscent of the so-called 'light and racy' films of the period, but go much further.

"The titles of the porno movies were way-out or provocative as they are nowadays. They simply indicated the subject matter suggestively: 'The Bellboy's Gaffe', 'The Special Bar', 'The Indulgent Husband', 'The Open-air Studio', 'An Outing in the Car', 'Bucolic Pleasures', 'At the Doctor's' and so on.

"A lot of wild fantasising has gone on about whether real film stars took part in such films. But it is almost impossible to prove that you're watching so-and-so having it away, and not a look-alike — and we had to take into account the danger of a possible libel action."

Porno films are a reflection of their times. At the beginning of this century, one finds a good deal of ribaldry and some scatology, which is rare in modern porno films, probably as a result of self-censorship. The same is true of zoophilia.

However, the current law forbids certain things in X-rated films, such as excessive violence, an over-degrading image of women, and child sex. Little girls appear in the older films, but they are fully grown actresses dressed up to look under-age. That again was a music hall tradition.

But Robert and Belaygue were not completely free to show what they wanted. They ran up against technical constraint. Many old films were shot on 9.5mm film, a gauge that has now virtually disappeared. Such films cannot be blown up to more then 16mm without their image becoming too blurred. And it is not feasible to project 8mm films in public — they would just come out as a tiny rectangle of light in the middle of the screen.

Similarly, it is forbidden to project inflammable nitrate film. The transfer on to modern acetate stock is expensive. Film archives can afford to do that, but many collectors do not fancy the idea of their treasures being reproduced and distributed: clearly, part of the enjoyment of porno films resides in their remaining exclusive and being shown in camera.

(July 4)

Constitution

Continued from page 12

Constitutionnel may seem to be "holding back the alternation of power" in 1986 as in 1981, it in fact "guarantees" such alternation to the extent that it helps to "canalise change" and therefore attenuate its indirect consequences?

That this is what the "wise men" of the Conseil Constitutionnel are aiming at becomes clear on reading their July 29 finding, since it contains a pointed reference to "the constitutional indispensability of pluralism in currents of opinion." For it would be quite fruitless to look in the 1958 Constitution for any expression of this "indispensability".

There is so little of it that the Conseil has justified its position on the subject by invoking the 1789 Declaration of Human Rights, which is referred to in the preamble to the Constitution. As the word "pluralism" was unknown at the time, the Conseil has taken the liberty of giving its interpretation of Article 11 of the Declaration of Human Rights by saying that the "free communication of thoughts and opinions" which it guarantees "would not be effective if the public to which these daily newspapers cater were not in a position to have a sufficient number of publications of different opinions available to it."

Well said. These facts are self-evident but it does no harm for them to be spelled out. Incidentally, we cannot see why this should not also apply, once the relevant changes have been made, in the case of radio and television from which the government is clumsily trying to disengage itself. But once the law is confirmed in this way, the essential part remains to be done — making sure that it is applied.

"Teeth" are precisely what the provisions on press concentrations embodied in the 1944 decree and the 1984 Mauroy law, which the Conseil Constitutionnel has just upheld, do not have. The finest lesson that the right, which talks constantly about liberty, could give the left would obviously be to do better than it in this sphere. In spite of the amendment announced by Francois d'Aubert (the UDF Deputy whose amendment required that abuses of monopoly and obstacles to competition should be avoided in allocating radio and television channels) and the constructive statements made by RPR Deputy Michel Péricard, we will believe it when we see it.

(August 1)

Le Monde
Directeur: Andre Fontaine

The Washington Post

Republican Sanctions

RONALD REAGAN had his chance to lead American policy on South Africa at a crucial moment when the United States was looking for a way to help turn civil war to conciliation. By a speech so pinched and equivocal that it drew cheers only in Pretoria, he forfeited that chance, and now the Senate is moving into the gap. Several tendencies are in evidence here, one leaning toward the across-the-board sanctions that the House startled itself by voting last month and a second effort, led by Republicans Lugar, Dole and Kassebaum, looking toward a more selective approach.

We think the Republican moderates are on the right track. They realize that the United States must be and must be seen to be enthusiastically and forthrightly on the side of black freedom rather than white privilege. This is not just a matter of posturing for political effect, although it is an important political development — one that we hope is noted in Pretoria — that active support for the end of apartheid is now widely seen as an electoral imperative. America is a multiracial society that strives to ensure equal rights for all its citizens, and this impresses a moral stance on American policy toward South Africa. With Americans now stirred as never before to the horrors of apartheid, a policy that ignores this reality can only fail of popular support.

The Republican senators have a sensible view of sanctions. It is that their effects cannot be precisely calculated, and it is surely unwise to expect, as some supporters of the House bill do, that the apartheid regime's grip on power is so slight and uncertain that it will inevitably loosen as Western sanctions are applied. But where persuasion has produced inadequate results and the situation within South Africa is sharply deteriorating, it is necessary to try turning up the pressure. The operating hope of the moderates is to alter the internal equation in South Africa — to give a stronger hand to those who feel it is in their country's urgent interest to soften the regime's continuing resistance to prompt, honest negotiations on a new political order. Hence the Lugar bill provides for new sanctions, targeted as much as possible on the favored whites, but offers the regime relief if it turns to the political path.

Argument over the wisdom and effectiveness of sanctions will go on. The next few weeks and months, however, are an interesting time to conduct it. The South Africans can see both the United States and Europe gathing for a leap forward on sanctions. It is the right time for the sort of political concessions that will moot sanctions and put South Africa on a path to justice.

Botha Overrides Courts

By Allister Sparks

JOHANNESBURG — President Botha issued a new decree last week enabling the government to reimpose a wide range of restrictions that had been invalidated by a court ruling. At the same time, his government announced that import licences would be required for goods imported from Zimbabwe.

Botha's new decree will enable the administration to reimpose a wide range of restriction orders made under the seven-week-old state of emergency. They became invalid as a result of a ruling by the Supreme Court of Transvaal Province. These include orders gagging 119 organizations opposing apartheid and the banning of many meetings. The court judgment ruled that only the minister of law and order or the commissioner of police could issue restriction orders under the emergency regulations. They could not delegate this authority to regional police chiefs.

This made a wide range of orders issued by local police chiefs invalid. Now President Botha's new decree specifically empowers these officers to issue such orders, which means that they will simply reissue the invalidated orders.

Although the Minister of Trade and Industries, Dawid de Villiers, issued a statement saying the decision to require import licenses for all goods entering the country from Zimbabwe was "purely an administrative measure to monitor imports from there," observers saw it as a deliberate warning of possible retaliatory action against the neighboring black state if South Africa faces international sanctions.

The Botha administration has said several times that it might act against its neighbors if the world acts against it. Manpower Minister Pieter T. de Plessis last week repeated a warning that foreign blacks working here might be repatriated if sactions increased unemployment in South Africa.

Restrictions on Zimbabwean imports would be a serious blow to that country at a time when its economy is suffering from a slump in world prices for its agricultural exports and the cancelation of $13.5 million of U.S. aid in retaliation for a public attack on U.S. policy toward South Africa.

U.S. Raises Stakes In Angola

By David B. Ottaway and Patrick E. Tyler

LUANDA, Angola — In the southern bushland of this African nation, rebel leader Jonas Savimbi is building camouflaged treetop platforms from which to fire new U.S. Stinger missiles at Soviet-built fighters and bombers. Hundreds of miles to the northwest, at Huambo and Lubango, Angolan government pilots (under the tutelage of Soviet and Cuban advisers) are flying day and night training missions in Soviet-built Mi24 assault helicopters and MiG23 jet fighters. Both sides are preparing for what may become the largest clash ever in Africa's hottest bush war.

Savimbi's South African-supported army already claims to have shot down, in the past two months, 10 Soviet-made aircraft, including jets, helicopter gunships and one Antonov 22 transport in heavy skirmishing in the south central highlands. There is no way to confirm these claims independently.

Meanwhile, officials of the Marxist government in the capital of Luanda are hinting that they may strike — under the doctrine of hot pursuit — at Savimbi's support bases and supply lines in neighboring Zaire, from which the Central Intelligence Agency supervises U.S. support for Savimbi, according to Angolan officials and other sources in Washington.

As both sides maneuver their armies into position, the threat of a widening war is becoming a major concern in the region. It has been learned that officials from Mozambique, the Angolan government's closest African ally, recently brokered a secret meeting in London between a top Savimbi lieutenant and an emissary from Luanda in hopes of getting the warring parties to the negotiating table. Angolan officials deny such contacts took place.

These exploratory talks showed no visible result, but they demonstrated that even the pro-Soviet Mozambicans believe the time has come to give Savimbi's guerrilla movement a share of the power in Angola. For its part, the Reagan administration — in pursuit of a tougher anti-Soviet stance in Africa, and with renewed aid to Savimbi — is stepping onto a war-weary battlefield, one where two large and well-equipped armies, totaling more than 150,000 men, are poised for another bloody — and this time critical — confrontation.

The pressure on the Angolan government either to crush Savimbi or negotiate with him has never been greater. The country's $3 billion budget is financed almost exclusively by oil revenues, which have been halved by the rapid decline in world prices. Luanda's desperate financial plight has called into question whether the government can continue to pay for the war. The stakes for Savimbi are equally high as he seeks to prove that he is a good bet to bring home the first victory for the Reagan administration's anticommunist struggle.

There are thousands of land mines sown in abandoned corn fields, from which hundreds of thousands of peasants have fled to the cities, making the once self-sufficient country now heavily dependent on food imports. There are no reliable casualty figures for this war. No one knows the civilian death toll.

In Luanda, residents trade soap, cigarettes and bottles of beer for fresh fruit and vegetables because money has become meaningless: barter is the principal means of trade. Road travel outside a 50-mile radius around the capital has become so dangerous that it is not safe to travel without a platoon of heavily armed escorts. The once-thriving diamond industry in the northeast has been ravaged by repeated guerrilla attacks.

In government-controlled areas, villagers say Savimbi's guerrillas are terrorizing them — planting mines in their gardens, dragging off their youth and indiscriminately shooting civilians — as part of a brutal campaign to demonstrate that the central government cannot protect them.

Although both sides claim military advantage, there is an overwhelming sense of unending stalemate here. The end of each rainy season brings government columns down from the north, riding on Soviet armor to assault the guerrilla redoubts in the south. And each year the columns bog down in the sandy bushland terrain until the attrition of guerrilla hit-and-run attacks sends them limping back to their northern bases.

Although there are no precise figures, it is estimated that Savimbi's forces number about 40,000, made up of both organized guerrilla units and dispersed fighters, while government forces are estimated at 110,000 regular troops and militia. There are also an estimated 27,000 Cuban soldiers here supporting the government and another 8,000 to 9,000 Cuban advisers.

The fighting began as a civil war that flashed 11 years ago with the sudden departure of Portuguese colonial power. But it quickly developed into a superpower contest, and in the end — after the victory of the Soviet-backed Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and U.S. withdrawal of clandestine aid, in January 1976, from Savimbi's National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) — it became the rock on which U.S.-Soviet detente foundered.

Angola since has smoldered as a distant war, a symbol of Soviet gains in southern Africa and disdain by Congress — which forced the end of aid to Savimbi upon a reluctant White House — for covert American involvement in Third World quagmires. Now, President Reagan and his national security advisers have decided to reenter this regional conflict in the name of the "Reagan Doctrine," to back anticommunist "freedom fighters" around the globe.

In March, the Pentagon and CIA began shipping sophisticated American weapons to Savimbi's guerrillas. The aid flowed after Savimbi and his supporters in the American conservative movement mounted a lobbying assault on Washington last February that included a 15-minute meeting and press photo opportunity with Reagan in the Oval Office, counseling at the Defense Department and political coaching — under a $600,000 contract — from a well-connected public relations firm, Black, Manafort, Stone and Kelly in Alexandria, Va.

Buoyed by this success, Savimbi said in an interview that he now intends to return to Washington this fall and seek an even larger commitment than the initial $15 million CIA support program approved last year by Reagan. In doing so, Savimbi warned that U.S. oil companies operating in Angola would be attacked if they opposed his bid for increased aid from Washington.

American involvement with Savimbi is increasingly apparent. In early June, a delegation of staff members from the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence slipped secretly into Angola, escorted by a U.S. Marine lieutenant colonel, to evaluate Savimbi's military organization. Before they returned to Washington, the staffers met with CIA station chiefs in Kinshasa, Zaire, and Pretoria, South Africa, as part of their oversight mission.

The outsiders in this war are the South Africans, the Soviets, the Cubans and, now, the United States, and their conflicting strategic interests, along with continuing military aid, provide the means for this war to go on indefinitely. After more than a decade of struggle, each side is s

Continued on page

Reagan Approves Wheat Sales To Soviet Union

By Thomas B. Edsall

PRESIDENT REAGAN, under conflicting pressure from grain-belt Republican senators and U.S. allies, last week approved the subsidized sale of four million metric tons of wheat to the Soviet Union. The decision was made over the objections of Secretary of State George Shultz and Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger as well as the protests of such key allies as Canada and Australia.

Before the decision was announced, John Kerin, Australian agriculture minister, declared: "The long, friendly relationship between Australia and the United States is going bad." Afterwards, he declared that "Australia is disappointed by the decision . . . (it will) put more pressure on the world wheat price. It is a very tough move." He had refused to link the decision to continued American use of military bases in Australia, but warned that "a head of steam is building up among conservative elements . . . to put the bases on the bargaining table. The United States has been our closest ally and friend at least since the last world war. But the United States can't expect us to support them in their larger strategic goals if we are going to be dumped."

A spokesman for the Canadian embassy said his government was "unable at this time to assess" the consequences of the subsidized sale to the Soviet Union. Earlier, the Canadian Ambassador, Allan E. Gottlieb, had said Canada was "extraordinarily concerned" over the US beginning to subsidize the Soviet consumer.

Key Republican senators, who raised the stakes for Reagan last week by winning Senate approval of legislation requiring subsidized sales to the Soviets and China, applauded the decision. But they warned that they intend to continue to press for legislation mandating far broader subsidies.

Republican political strategists, stuggling to retain control of the Senate, view increased international wheat sales as potentially critical to the outcome of contests in the already-depressed grain belt. Proponents contend that the subsidy is essential in order to compete with European Common Market countries, whose farmers receive subsidies lowering the c per ton to about $80.

The subsidy was sharply cr cized by Sen. Daniel Patr Moynihan, D-N.Y., who said administration decision le credibility to communist pre tions of capitalist deteriorat Citing Lenin's contention that italist countries would end competing to distribute surpl to communist countries, Moyn said: "The irony is that the anti-Soviet government of a eration should be intereste subsidizing this process, the reinforcing the prophesy."

The Washington Post

Selling Wheat, Buying Votes

ELECTION YEARS have never brought out the best in Bob Dole. As orchestrator of the current effort to keep the Senate in Republican hands, he is once again letting a close contest cloud his judgment. We have in mind his successful high-pressuring of the administration on wheat sales to the Soviet Union.

This administration — American conservatives generally — has a mixed history on the hard subject of commerce with the Soviet Union. One of the president's earliest acts in office was to cast aside the Carter grain embargo. But his is also the administration that fought the Soviet gas pipeline to Europe, in part on grounds that it would greatly benefit the Soviets and leave the Europeans too dependent on them.

A minimal position for both the administration and those with Mr. Dole's general approach to foreign affairs would seem to be that the United States should not subsidize the Soviet Union, and particularly not at the expense of such allies as Australia and Argentina. They, too, export wheat, for the most part apparently well within the rules, meaning without blatant subsidy, and they will now lose, or fear they will, insofar as U.S. farmers gain. The case of Argentina, a vulnerable democracy that needs foreign sales to service large foreign debts, including debts to U.S. banks, is particularly poignant.

So internally the State Department fought subsidies. It was right — and it lost. Mr. Dole, unencumbered on this issue by either memory or breadth of vision, powered straight ahead, and the White House buckled. The solution was a compromise, an effort to support and buy off the farm-state Republicans as cheaply as possible. It went too far, even so. You actually don't need to reach the issue of what our posture should be toward the Soviet Union. Farm export subsidies of the kind in question here are poor policy, no matter whom they go to.

The farm problem is familiar. Grain and other staple prices on the strength of which decisions are made to grow and buy are set partly by the government. In recent years they have been set too high. Too much has been grown, and world buyers have turned to other countries, whose prices have been lower.

The way to correct this is to lower government supports. Last year's farm bill started to do this, but slowly; the farm-state senators and congressmen who wrote it were reluctant to squeeze constituents too hard. Export subsidies are an effort to skip the pain by shifting more burden from farmers to taxpayers. The government lifts the price to farmers, then cuts it to foreign buyers; it pays double, but the fundamentals are untouched. Competitors are led to retaliate; you can drain the Treasury just to stand still.

But in Congress just now, in Bob Dole's Senate particularly, this doesn't matter. They're not selling wheat up there; they're buying votes, and trampling the better instincts of their own administration in the process.

The Biggest Debtor

LIKE MEXICO AND BRAZIL, the United States is now an international debtor on a large scale. Mexico and Brazil each owes around £100 billion. Here in the United States, foreign investments now outweigh American investments abroad by about £170 billion, and that figure is probably rising at a rate of about £125 billion a year.

There are important differences between the Latin debts and the United States'. Mexico and Brazil owe the money chiefly to commercial banks. The foreign funds were mostly sent to this country by people who were attracted by high returns in the American financial markets or who wanted their money in American banks for safekeeping. But the economic effect is the same. Just as the Latins have to pay interest on their foreign debts, so must the Americans. While the burden is lighter here, in proportion to the size of the economy, it is already beginning to be large enough to affect the country's prosperity.

It's the first time since before World War I that the United States has been a debtor. For 70 years it was a creditor, piling up investments abroad faster than foreigners invested here, with the net balance reaching a peak of £142 billion in 1981. That's all gone now, and the accounts have swung heavily in the other direction. The Commerce Department's Bureau of Economic Analysis has published a detailed accounting of the country's investment position in 1985, and the figures are, in a gloomy way, instructive. Not much of the foreign money is being used to buy businesses in this country, or to start new ones. Most of it is going into the market, from which it could be withdrawn very quickly if its owners ever decided that the prospect was better somewhere else. It is very volatile money.

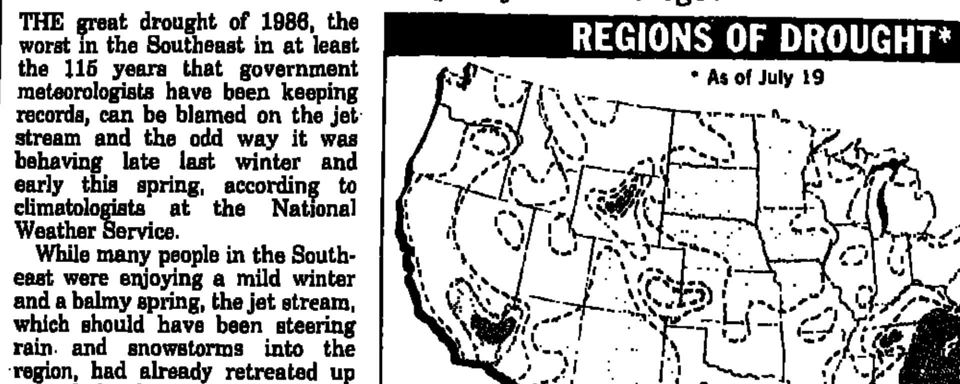
Nearly half of it last year came from Western Europe. Another fourth came from Japan. Nearly a fourth came from Latin America, nearly all of it apparently tucked into bank deposits.

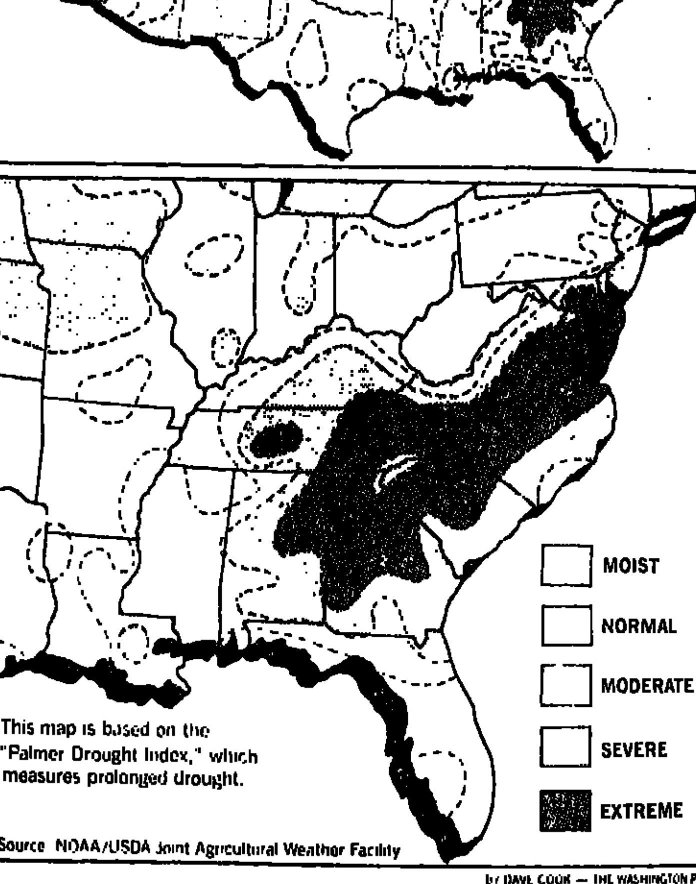
Most of the debtor countries, in the past several years, have gone through wrenching programs of adjustment to get their foreign accounts under control. The exception is the United States, which does not really look on its debts as debts since, after all, those people sent their money here voluntarily. But the same thing could be said of the banks that sent their money to Mexico.

There's nothing wrong in principle with borrowing — if the money is used well. Mexico got itself into trouble by borrowing and using the money disproportionately for consumption. Now it is going to try to rescue itself by borrowing more, this time to strengthen its industry. Here in the United States, with business investment falling, the foreign money is mainly supporting consumption and an unearned standard of living — which is very pleasant, as long as the foreign lenders keep lending.

Jet Stream Blamed For Drought

By Boyce Rensberger





This map is based on the "Palmer Drought Index," which measures prolonged drought.

Source NOAA/USDA Joint Agricultural Weather Facility

BY DAVE COOK — THE WASHINGTON POST

THE great drought of 1986, the worst in the Southeast in at least the 115 years that government meteorologists have been keeping records, can be blamed on the jet stream and the odd way it was behaving late last winter and early this spring, according to climatologists at the National Weather Service.

While many people in the Southeast were enjoying a mild winter and a balmy spring, the jet stream, which should have been steering rain and snowstorms into the region, had already retreated up toward the Canadian border, giving the precipitation to the Midwest and New England.

The jet stream, a permanent high-altitude wind encircling the Earth in a generally west-to-east direction, normally drifts northward during spring, leaving behind soil wet enough to turn the grass green and get the crops off to a strong start. Through most of the summer the Southeast lives off the wet soil, helped by the occasional summer evening storm. Most of those storms, however, have disappeared — another casualty of the wayward jet stream.

"Droughts will occur for their own reasons, but when you get one like this — One that's definitely in the record books already — you start to look at other factors: long-range cycles that could mean we're in for droughts recurring year after year," said Murray Mitchell, a research climatologist who recently retired from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Mitchell said there is evidence that the current drought may be part of a 22-year climatic cycle linked to the behavior of the sun's magnetic field. The last major dry spell in the Southeast occurred during the mid-1960s.

The 22-year drought cycle has been well established for the western United States, going as far back as 1600. Mitchell was one of the scientists who discovered this cycle by studying the growth rings of very old trees. During droughts, trees grow slowly and have narrower rings.

Tree ring studies in the East have not been completed. However, Mitchell said, climatologists have noticed a general "seesawing pattern" in which the western droughts coincide with wet spells in the East and vice versa. Most of the United States west of the Mississippi is currently enjoying normal or unusually wet weather.

Mitchell emphasized that although droughts can occur for various non-cyclic reasons, the 22-year solar magnetic cycle seems to increase the likelihood of droughts and worsen droughts that begin for other reasons.

No one knows how the solar cycle affects Earth's climate. "That's one of the great mysteries," Mitchell said. "But when you look at the data going back over the centuries, it pops right out at you: The cycle is real."

The seesaw pattern is a consequence of the jet stream. Although the jetstream is often depicted as a tightly constricted current of air, it actually is a diffuse wind, the core of the prevailing westerlies. At its center, winds blow about 100 mph in summer and up to about 200 mph in winter, usually between five and seven miles above the ground.

The jet stream is a natural consequence of hotter air at the equator and colder air at the poles. Warm equatorial air rises, flows northward (in the southern hemisphere it flows southward), cools over the North Pole and sinks back to the ground to flow south, completing the circuit.

If the Earth did not spin, winds near ground level would tend always to blow from the north. The Earth's spinning, however, imparts a sideways motion that, at the core, is the jet stream.

During late winter the jet stream, or at least its subtropical branch, normally cuts across Mexico and picks up moisture over the Gulf of Mexico, said James Wagner, a climate analyst for the National Weather Service. It carries the clouds in a northeastward direction, across the Southeast and over the Atlantic around Cape Hatteras.

"As spring moves up from the South, it pushes the jet stream northward," Wagner said. "By May it's running from east Texas to up along the Ohio Valley. As it moves to the north, it's bringing the rain farther and farther north."

In a normal year the humid spring of Georgia becomes the humid summer of Washington. Most of the soil moisture on which farmers rely in the Southeast is an endowment deposited as the jet stream migrates northward over the region.

"This is the main source of the water we have to live on for the summer," Wagner said. "Once the jet stream is up north, the summer rains we get are mostly a result of evaporation that forms thunderheads in the late afternoon." In other words, summer rains are largely a recycling of the same water brought in by the jet stream. The water evaporates from the soil and from plant leaves, from rivers and lakes, and forms clouds that drop the water down again not far away. Summer storms, however, usually return less water to the soil than was lost through evaporation. As evaporation draws on the original endowment, only part of the water is reinvested in the soil. As summer wears on, the balance dwindles. Normally the effects don't show in the grass or on the crops until late August, when the crops are mature.

This year, however, the lack of a substantial endowment from the jet stream has meant that there is little water that can evaporate back into the air. As a result, summer rains have been unusually spare and spotty. July's water balance is down to where, in a normal year, it would be in late August or early September.

The lack of evaporation also has meant hotter air temperatures. Normally some of the sun's energy is absorbed by water molecules, turning them from liquid to vapor. With evaporation rates so low, more of the solar energy simply goes into heating the soil and air.

Still, there is enough evaporation to keep the air humid. Normally this warm, humid air would rise until a cooler upper atmosphere condensed the water vapor back into rain. This summer the upper atmosphere has usually been too warm to condense much water. The water vapor remains muggy water vapor.

With summer's usual source of rain gone, Wagner said, the drought is not likely to break until the fall hurricane season begins. Most fall rains come from tropical storms that form in the Caribbean and move over the Southeast. Most don't become hurricanes, but they can bring heavy rains.

"We won't really know whether we're in a long-term drought until we see what happens next year or the year after," said Mitchell. "If you want to worry, though, there's some evidence to support you."

Officials have estimated the agricultural losses from the drought at up to $1·9 billion. And Secretary of Agriculture Richard E. Lyng approved disaster relief for 89 counties in North Carolina.

Savimbi Gives Details Of South African Military Aid

By Patrick E. Tyler

LIKUA, ANGOLA — Guerrilla leader Jonas Savimbi now acknowledges his serious miscalculation last year when he predicted that the Angolan government's dry season offensive would hit in the country's eastern panhandle.

The fighting was indeed fierce there during August and into September. Modern Soviet T-62 tanks were ripping apart Savimbi's lightly armed battalions. But during the pitch of the battle, Savimbi got word that the government had opened up a second, larger front in the south.

In a matter of hours, it became apparent to Savimbi that he was the victim of a clever battlefield feint that had left his strongest assault forces 350 miles out of position. It would take more than a week to move reinforcements south by truck. So Savimbi did the only thing he felt he could do: he called in the South African military.

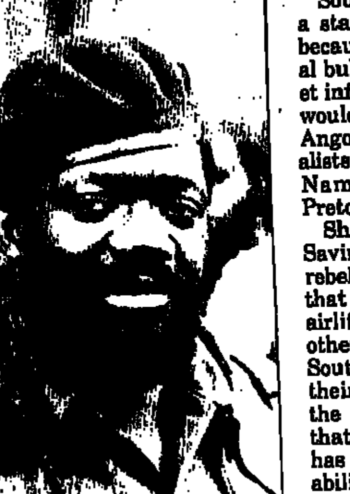
At a bush-country hideaway near this large logistical base on the Luengue River, Savimbi discussed in detail, and explained for the first time publicly, South Africa's deep involvement in countering last year's government offensive. Were it not for South Africa's intervention, many military experts have said the offensive might have succeeded in overrunning Savimbi's forces and effectively crushing UNITA.

It became the battle for Mavinga, whose large airstrip would give the Angolan government the springboard it needed to deal a final, crushing blow to Savimbi: a southern air base from which to fly Soviet-made fighters and bombers against UNITA's largest fortresses here and at Jamba.

"When we understood the major thrust was at Mavinga, it was too late," Savimbi said. "So we had to ask the South Africans to take 2,000 troops in four days and four nights from (the eastern panhandle) and put them here (outside Mavinga). Then we said, 'Give us mortars, ammo and cannons of every quality,' and they gave it."

To fly those reinforcements, the South African Air Force put at risk its American-made C-130 Hercules transports, Savimbi said. The South African pilots flew more than 1,000 miles round-trip through Angolan air space to complete the airlift. "It was a major effort," he said. "A Hercules can take a battalion with its support weapons and in a few hours put you where you want to be."

Savimbi denied allegations made from Luanda that South African infantry units and jet fighters carried out support missions for UNITA during the central government's offensive last year. "The South Africans are —



Jonas Savimbi

how can I put it — committed, you can say so," Savimbi said. "But the South Africans have their own problems and we think they will place their priorities on their own situation at home first, second in Namibia and third in Angola.

"If they are not against the wall, I think they will do all they can to continue to support UNITA — because I have no doubt in my mind that the South Africans see that if UNITA is crippled — or let us take the extreme: wiped out — it will have a very negative impact on southern Africa."

South Africa has always claimed a stake in the Angolan civil war because it sees itself as the regional bulwark against spreading Soviet influence in southern Africa and would like also to undermine Angola's support for black nationalists, seeking the independence of Namibia and to overthrow Pretoria's white rule.

Should this year's offensive put Savimbi's back to the wall, the rebel leader said he does not believe that he can count on South Africa's airlift capability again, or any other form of air support. "The South Africans will not sacrifice their air power to save UNITA for the simple fact that they now see that (the Angolan government) has improved tremendously their ability of detecting the planes and interfering with them."

His intelligence showed that Soviet and Cuban technicians have helped the Luanda government set up a radar network and SAM missile sites in strategic locations across the southern and central portion of the country. Due to this threat, Savimbi said, "I don't think the South Africans are in any mood to intervene massively with air power. They think that they may risk their own Mirages, which are not the most modern Mirages." The Soviet MiG-23s now in use by the Angolan air force were superior to the aging South-African Mirages.

At the moment, Savimbi is carefully managing his still-burgeoning relationship with the United States. The morale and propaganda boost UNITA has taken from his successful trip to Washington last winter is everywhere in evidence in his camps. White House photos of Savimbi sitting with President Reagan in the Oval Office have been plastered on tree trunks with masking tape.

In case anyone misses these photos, Savimbi has had a 30-foot-high reproduction made on a hand-painted banner for use in political rallies. Other tree-trunk photos show Savimbi with Secretary of State George P. Shultz and his predecessor, Alexander M. Haig Jr.

The nature of U.S. support for Savimbi still makes it awkward for him to discuss it. He will not say directly that he has received U.S. Stinger anti-aircraft missiles from the Pentagon and Central Intelligence Agency, but he cannot suppress the obvious pride he feels to have received this prestigious level of support.

"The president has promised us support and we got that support . . . and it was delivered as quickly as was possible," Savimbi said. "We asked him to give us something effective against the air (power) and against the (tank) armor and . . . we got what we asked for. And if there are Stingers or not Stingers, that's sensitive to me for the simple reason that I don't want the (Angolan government) and the Russians to know what I have."

Intelligence sources in Washington, however, have indicated that the Reagan administration remains embarrassed that its decision to arm Savimbi with Stingers leaked to the press. The administration had impressed upon Savimbi the need to keep this CIA assistance covert to avoid further diplomatic turbulence.

The CIA training of Savimbi's forces on Stingers and U.S. Light Antitank Weapons (LAWs) is said by sources to be taking place at a secure encampment where reporters are not allowed during visits to UNITA territory.

Savimbi said the new U.S. weapons are not yet "engaged in the battle," and indicated that they were being deployed to counter any attempted air strikes against the largest of UNITA's bases here and at Jamba.

U.S. Raises Stakes In Angola

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too weak to inflict a decisive military blow on the other or to hold a significant amount of the vast Angolan territory, which is twice the size of Texas.

The government controls the larger towns and cities and exercises loose control over two-thirds of the country. Savimbi operates freely in the remaining one-third and has infiltrated thousands of guerrillas deep into northern Angola.

In Savimbi's camps, morale is high and the imprint of South Africa is strong. Everything from soft drinks, soap and cigarettes to trucks, weapons and gasoline is shipped overland or flown to clandestine airstrips from South African bases across the southern border in Namibia.

In Luanda, government officials say South African army units have moved into southern Angola to block any new attempt to dislodge Savimbi. The Angolan Army chief of staff, Colonel Antionio dos Santos Ndalu, said two South African battalions are more or less permanently stationed now in the Ondjiva area, 25 miles from the Namibian border. In addition, he said, South Africa has moved the so-called Buffalo Battalion, a mixed, 3,000-man force of UNITA and South African troops, into a defensive position northwest of Mavinga to protect the approach to Savimbi's headquarters at Jamba.

Backing up these elements are an additional 20,000 regular South African troops based just across the border in Namibia and ready to launch their own offensive at any moment, Colonel Ndalu said. "They can do it whenever they want. But they generally do it when we prepare to launch an offensive against the puppets," he said, referring to Savimbi's forces.

One important element in the government's war strategy this year is to halt the steady infiltration of Savimbi's guerrillas into the northern provinces from Zaire. The region is of particular importance, because it is the country's main coffee-growing area, and the government has launched a campaign to boost exports, hoping to take advantage of high world coffee prices.

"We are convinced UNITA is using Zaire today," said Vice Foreign Minister Venancio de Moura in an interview. "We don't want to resort to the right of hot pursuit like South Africa, but our military has had enough. Zaire was informed we have evidence that UNITA guerrillas are being trained in Zaire," he said. "We cannot cross our arms and wait for Zaire, South Africa and the CIA to destabilize Angola."

U.S. Vetoes World Court Resolution At U.N.

By Michael J. Berlin

UNITED NATIONS — The United States last week vetoed a Nicaraguan resolution under which the Security Council would have urged "full compliance" with a World Court ruling demanding an end to U.S. support for the anti-Sandinista rebels. The vote was 11 to 1, with Britain, France and Thailand abstaining. Two U.S. allies — Denmark and Australia — voted in favor of the resolution.

U.S. Ambassador Vernon Walters said his government was compelled to veto because the resolution would have been a disservice to international law, a cover for Sandinista actions violating U.N. principles and would not contribute to peace in Central America. He charged that Nicaragua would "exploit such a resolution as a blanket endorsement of its military and domestic policies."

Nicaraguan representative Nora Astorga charged that the veto constituted "a vote against the fundamental principles and norms of this organization, a vote against the International Court of Justice, a vote against the peaceful settlement of disputes, a vote against international peace and security, and a vote for war, intervention and the use of force in international relations."

Overall, the speakers who backed the Sandinistas were the Soviet Union and its closest allies, such as Afghanistan, Vietnam, Cuba and Bulgaria. They were joined by several of the more militant Third World countries, such as Iran and Zimbabwe. El Salvador and Honduras spoke up on the United States' side. Most of Latin America remained silent. Venezuela, speaking on behalf of the eight nations engaged in the Contadora negotiating process, carefully balanced its call for "democracy and freedom" with its opposition to war "and any kind of belligerent intervention."

On the legal side, the outcome left the World Court judgment in an indeterminate state. Despite Washington's rejection of court jurisdiction, court rulings of this type are compulsory in theory, in the view of many legal experts. But as a practical matter, neither the Council, the Assembly nor the Court has the capacity to enforce compliance.

The resolution, couched in the mildest possible terms, did not condemn the U.S. stand by implication, nor did it mention the United States by name. The resolution reaffirmed the role of the World Court as the U.N.'s principal judicial organ. It made "an urgent and solemn call for full compliance with the judgment." It recalled the obligation to seek solutions to disputes by peaceful means and to refrain from economic or military actions that might impede the Central American peace process.

The Man Who Cooked Wellington's Beef And Potatoes

By David Howarth

YOUR MOST OBEDIENT SERVANT. By James Thornton, Cook to the Duke of Wellington. Salem House. 120pp. $9.95.

ONCE in a while a tremor of genteel excitement passes among historians, when one of them discovers a document never heard of before. This is the latest, and an oddity among historical documents, the story of the Duke of Wellington's cook.

Loyal cooks or butlers do not write reminiscences. History might be more amusing if they did. But this one was told to do it. His name was James Thornton. As Wellington's cook he had followed his master through most of the Peninsular War and the whole of the Waterloo campaign. Thirty years later, he became cook to Lord Frederick Fitzclarence, one of the numerous bastard sons of the Duke of Clarence, who became King William IV; and Lord Frederick wrote out a questionnaire, nearly 100 questions, and told Thornton to answer them. It is the manuscript of those questions and answers, beautifully written but forgotten ever since, that has now been found in the traditionally dusty shelves of an antiquarian bookstore.

With that origin, one cannot look for back-stairs gossip or scandal. Lord Frederick's worthy idea was that "everything concerned with the habits and customs of the great Hero would be interesting to the world, particularly to Military men." From that rather limited point of view, he chose his questions well. A hundred and thirty years later, his questionnaire has made a slender but oddly fascinating little book, full of answers to questions that standard history does not think of asking. For example: when the army was advancing, how did the C.-in-C.'s butler and cook and their assistants avoid getting captured, yet always arrive ahead of him at the next headquarters town and have dinner cooked and the table laid for himself and the dozen staff officers who usually dined with him? Thornton makes it sound easy. The Quartermaster told him what town had been chosen, and he loaded himself and his kitchen equipment on 80 mules, and "found his way in the best manner I could." "I had a good mule," he added, as if that explained everything, "always the same except when he fell lame."

Readers who do not know the history of the Peninsular War will be very glad of Lady Longford's introduction, which takes up almost half the book. She does know more about that history than anyone else, and more about the Duke of Wellington, too, and she writes about him and the "gilded" young officers of his staff with easy intimacy, as if it had been a family party and she is a member of the family. She is surprised, and so am I, that Lord Frederick seldom asked about the actual food that Thornton cooked. I am sure she is right in thinking that Wellington's usual dinners were so dull that there is nothing to be said about them: "Beef, mutton, potatoes; potatoes, mutton, beef." The Duke was known for his Spartan tastes — and after all, that is what most English gentlemen would have chosen to eat in that era: "none of your foreign fads," they would have said.

In the Waterloo campaign there was a wider choice of exotic food, and the Duke gave more frequent and elegant balls and dinners. There was also a much wider choice of expert Belgian chefs. But Thornton was greatly annoyed by a story that the Duke had a Belgian cook. He alone, he insisted, had done all the Duke's cooking, including the tragic midnight dinner after the battle of Waterloo itself, where so many of Wellington's men had perished.

I have always been astonished by the Duke's physical fitness, especially — being no horseman, myself — by the distances he habitually covered on horseback. After the Duchess of Richmond's famous ball in Brussels, he had two hours' sleep, then started at six in the morning to ride to Quatre Bras, then to Ligny where the Prussians were fighting Napoleon's right wing, back to Quatre Bras, then in a fighting retreat back to Waterloo — a good 50 or 60 miles. Then another night with two hours' sleep, the battle of a lifetime and 18 hours more in the saddle, and all on the same horse. Now I learn that he "never took any refreshments with him, when he mounted his horse, except a crust of Bread and perhaps a hard boiled egg in his pocket."

At half past midnight after the battle, he rode back to his headquarters in the village of Waterloo, and there was the faithful Thornton waiting with a hot dinner ready. It had been ready for the past 12 hours, but Lord Frederick did not ask him how he had kept it hot. And he had laid the table as usual for a dozen staff officers. But that night the Duke came in alone and ate in miserable silence and glanced up whenever the door was opened, as if he hoped to see at least one more of his staff alive. Then he lay down on a pallet on the floor to sleep because one of his aides was dying on his bed.

David Howarth is the author of "Waterloo Day of Battle" and many other narrative histories.

The Way We Think We Were

THE PAST IS A FOREIGN COUNTRY. By David Lowenthal. Cambridge University Press. 489pp. $27.95.

By Peter Laslett

WHEN I WAS teaching for a month or two at Yale, every inch the visiting British Mascot, I made a casual remark which suddenly got me into hot water. "You Americans," I said, "have a vivider sense of the past than we do. History really matters to you. It doesn't matter at all that much to me." It was hastily decided, when the shock died down, that I only *thought* I had less of a sense of the past than my hosts. In fact I took my British past so much for granted that I was quite unconscious of it — which was what they liked about the Brits.

It is certainly open to me all these years later to cite the present book on my side of the argument. Here is an American, though interestingly enough an American who seems now to live and work in Britain, rolling over 450 annotated, illustrated, elaborated pages on the past. Everything distinguishable about the past is here. How we know it, if indeed we know it at all. What it means to us, and how we lose a sense of meaning if we have no access to it. If we can escape it, and the consequences of doing so. Or is it, as Herbert Butterfield put it — Butterfield who is so much an influence it would seem on Lowenthal — that the past is coiled up inside ourselves like our entrails? Carried everywhere and crucial to our well-being, that is to say, but never more comfortably carried than when we can forget about them altogether.

This is the point made to me at Yale all over again, but it still does not speak to my position then. What strikes me about Americans is that the events, the outcomes of the past are part and parcel of their citizenship in their country, of *being* Americans. It appears to matter enormously to every voter, every person, in the whole of the U.S.A., that Abraham Lincoln and the North won the Civil War. It is the same with the events in which the Founding Fathers were caught up, and the beliefs and attitudes which they shared and handed down. But nothing, absolutely nothing, in British history weighs like this, at least on me.

I don't care a fig that it was Cromwell and his Roundheads who won the Civil War in the 17th century, because nothing whatever in my present life depends upon it. Magna Carta means even less to me, and is not to be mentioned in the same breath as the American Constitution, because its importance to British Liberty, a faded phrase in any case, is a fiction rather than a fact. The Norman Conquest took place so long ago that it can't possibly count in my experience, even though faint and far-off echoes whisper at me now that the Channel Tunnel is really going to happen.

David Lowenthal is splendid on the Founding Fathers and their doctrines, and how difficult it was for their followers, since a legacy of revolution cannot itself be revolted against. Another tiny trace element of the 1980s here — for this is just the situation of those who write in *Samizdat* in Eastern Europe, wearied to the aching of the bones with the pressure on them of revolutionist doctrines. How can they raise a banner of revolution against *The Revolution?*

The past seems to stand to David Lowenthal as his own loved subject stood to Robert Burton when he wrote and rewrote, chiselled, polished and complicated his *Anatomy of Melancholy* and finally published it in 1621. This was an even hoftier, academic volume and one which could so transfix its devotees that it was the only book which Samuel Johnson the stayabed got up early in order to go on reading. There is the same fascination with mystery and paradox, that the past should be so entirely inaccessible and yet so close and compelling, so continually echoing back the still, sad music of humanity yet so marvelously pleasurable. Because of nostalgia.

This book is splendid on nostalgia, too, and marvelous on those little bits and pieces from the vanished past which serve to legitimate and celebrate. Best of all to my mind, in an amazing array of illustrations, is the tacked-up timber Grecian pediment presiding over the shack which houses a branch of the Security Marine Bank of Madison, Wisconsin. It is, as you will see, a book which you will enjoy, if you know that the past attracts you, or if you think you are immune to its power or its spell, as those colleagues of mine in New Haven thought I thought I was.

Perhaps indeed it is the working social historian, or historical sociologist as we heavily name him now, who will appreciate this *tour de force* the least. What weighs on me as I go about the highly professional business of getting to know previous states of the society I inhabit are the loves and the hatreds, the aims and the successes, the disappointments and the beliefs of our predecessors. I yearn to do them justice, every single one of them who swim into my little shaft of vision. And I recognize all the time that I am faced with the impossible, with the entirely infinite extent and complication of human life.

David Lowenthal does not seem to feel as much like this. It does not appear to be past people, fellow citizens of the human polity, who speak to him, but rather what they did and how it still affects him. Because he is an American?

Peter Laslett, a fellow of Trinity College and director of the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure, is the author of "The Past We Have Lost."

The 'Good' Book With Every Form Of Depravity

By Haynes Johnson

WASHINGTON — At the time of the Scopes trial on banning the teaching of evolution in the state of Tennessee, the Georgia Legislature debated a bill establishing public libraries. It would have allowed counties, school districts and municipalities to establish and maintain public libraries either by taxation or by donations.

A representative of a rural county arose to deliver a speech in opposition to the bill. There were only three books in the world worth reading, he proclaimed. These were the Bible, the Christian hymnbook and the almanac.

"Those three are enough for anyone," Hal Wimberly told his fellow lawmakers. "Read the Bible. It teaches you how to act. Read the hymnbook. It contains the finest poetry ever written. Read the almanac. It shows you how to figure out what the weather will be. There isn't another book that is necessary for anyone to read, and therefore I am opposed to all libraries."

The bill had come to the floor for debate after a committee recommended passage. When the final votes were taken, Rep. Wimberly's point of view prevailed. The public library bill was defeated, 63 to 57.

This led the irrepressibly wicked H.L. Mencken to reprint an Atlanta wire service story about the incident in his American Mercury magazine. And when he republished it the year of the Scopes trial in his collection, "Americana 1925," Mencken was moved to attach this headline:

"Progress of fundamentalism in bucolic Georgia, as revealed by a press dispatch from the state capitol."

Leave it to the modern-day fundamentalists to demonstrate that that almost unbelievable occurrence 61 years ago is not an impossible anachronism in the America of the mid-1980s. Today's electronic evangelists are doing it again, and with about the same subtlety. They are writing a new chapter in the shameful story of book-banning — and they're doing so with the same bullying techniques of the past.

The most notable recent example, and by no means the only one, involves the Rev. Jimmy Swaggart, an energetic hellfire-and-brimstone television preacher based in Baton Rouge, La., whose exhortations are seen on TV screens in homes across the country.

On June 1, during one of his nationally telecast sermons, Swaggart denounced the sale of rock music magazines in apocalyptic terms for encouraging immoral behavior among America's teenagers. Such magazines were inspired by the devil, he said, linking them to the wave of pornography supposedly endangering the moral fabric of the republic. He specified at least one magazine and warned that it could "be bought by children of all ages at places like Wal-Mart, K mart, the grocery store and practically any other retail store that sells magazines."

Twelve days after that broadcast, Wal-Mart issued a memorandum ordering all rock-oriented publications banned from its stores. In its instructions to wholesalers, Wal-Mart named 32 such publications, including the well-known magazine Rolling Stone, and ordered the wholesalers to remove "any other rock titles you may be placing in Wal-Mart stores."

Wal-Mart is not some little business. It is a department store chain with 890 outlets in 22 states, primarily in the South and Southwest. Although a Wal-Mart spokesman characterized its action as "strictly a merchandising decision" when interviewed by Richard Harrington of The Washington Post, there seems no doubt about the connection between Swaggart's nationally broadcast sermon and the banning of the publications. Harrington also quoted the spokesman as saying, "We don't see it as a censorship issue; we see it as a free enterprise issue."

It is, of course, both. Wal-Mart has a right to sell what it wishes, within the boundaries of the law, and the public has a right to condemn its withdrawal decision as the worst sort of caving in to pressure from book-banners and bigots.

By peculiar coincidence, even as this newest censorship battle flares, the fundamentalists and public school educators are again locked in legal battle in Tennessee over whether textbooks fail to reflect stories in the Bible literally. How Mencken would have relished it. By all means ban those books describing immoral acts. And start with the volume that recounts murder, rape, sodomy, incest and every other form of human depravity and barbarity, the Bible.

Silbury Hill, Wiltshire.

Birthday at Lammas-tide

By Ralph Whitlock

"THE largest artificial mound in Europe" is the definition given by The Guinness Book of Records to Silbury Hill, the site of which occupies 5½ acres in my home county, Wiltshire. Lying just over a mile south of the gigantic stone circle of Avebury, Silbury is an earthen cone or pyramid, 130 feet high, the making of which involved moving 670,000 tons of chalk, a task which required an estimated 18 million hours of work by men using antler picks. Presented with these formidable facts, our obvious reaction is to ask, Why?

Many attempts have been made to find the answer. On the grounds that it resembles a giant round-barrow, a popular theory has been that it is a burial mound. Local lore claims that it was raised over the grave of a King Sil, who was buried there, sitting on his horse and surrounded by vast treasure. So from 1776 onwards a series of excavators have probed Silbury, sinking shafts from top to bottom and driving tunnels into the very centre of the hill.

The most comprehensive investigation of all was conducted by Professor Richard Atkinson and the BBC in 1968 and 1969. Months of patient work, in full view of television cameras, failed to reveal King Sil in his golden armour or any other burial. Summarising the dig, Professor Atkinson wrote, "No trace of any structure, deposit or ancient disturbance was found in the small area near the centre which had not previously been disturbed."

Evidently Silbury was not a burial mound, but the question remained, "What, then, was it?"

Recently I have been browsing through a book, published in 1976 but which I have previously missed seeing, entitled *The Silbury Treasure,* by author Michael Dames, who is convinced he knows the answer. The hill is, he says, the Mother Goddess herself, of primitive religion.

Our ancestors in those far-off days had no notions of false modesty. The earth, they knew, produced the crops which kept them alive; women produced the children which ensured the continuity of the tribe; so the existence of an Earth Mother or Goddess was a logical inference.

The essential function of a mother is to give birth, so it seemed sensible to them to depict the goddess as a heavily pregnant woman, about to give birth. And that, says Mr Dames, is exactly what Silbury is. It is a huge, three-dimensional goddess in a squatting posture, and he quotes numerous examples of similar representations of the Earth Goddess from different cultures.

Nothing is ever simple, of course, and he believes that the ground plan at Silbury, as well as the hill itself, also represents a woman on the point of giving birth. Her form is outlined by the water which surrounds the hill. But there is even more to it than that. If, at the appropriate time, you stand on the terrace which surrounds the top of the hill you can witness the birth of the child which the goddess is bearing!

The sequence of events is as follows. At 7.35pm the sun sets. At 8pm the moon rises. The moon is the "baby". After its birth at 8pm, you can see it in various positions with relation to its mother, such as lying on her knee, until at ten minutes past midnight it reaches its maximum altitude. That, according to Mr Dames, was the moment for cutting the umbilical cord and probably for the ceremonial cutting of the first stalks of corn, which he thinks were probably growing in a sacred patch on top of the hill. It was, in fact, the signal for the beginning of harvest.

And what was this all-important date? Why, Lammas-tide. Nowadays Lammas falls on August 8, but to fit in with the less precise calendar of primitive men a margin of a week or two on either side has to be allowed. The key factor is that the festival was observed when the full moon rose within half-an-hour of so of sunset. And that occurs approximately midway between Midsummer and the autumnal equinox.

As I read this conjectural account of the origin and significance of Silbury all that I know about Lammas seemed to fall into place. At times, when speaking at Harvest Homes and Harvest Festivals, I have deplored the abolition of old-style August Bank Holiday, which fell on the first weekend of August. Though in its latter days it was simply a convenient date for a holiday, it did serve to perpetuate the ancient festival of Lammas, the traditional date for the gathering of first-fruits and so the beginning of harvest.

In Christian centuries the wheat grains from the first harvest field were quickly ground into flour and made into bread, in the form of little loaves. These were brought to church and presented to the priest at the altar. The celebration was called "Loaf-mass", hence Lammas.

Six weeks or so later, at the end of harvest, the last stalks of corn were carefully cut and fashioned into a Corn Dolly or Kern Baby. Though straw-weaving now is a popular craft with Women's Institutes and other village organisations, the Corn Dolly was once a potent goddess, capable of giving life to the seed for the next harvest. That is why, after the winter solstice, she was gently laid in a furrow and buried by good soil. And originally she was fashioned from the corn cut at Lammas, not at the harvest's end.

The story of Silbury begins so very long ago. According to the latest estimates it is dated at 2745 BC, give or take about 200 years either way. But a few Lammas customs still linger, while others were abandoned within living memory. Some are concerned with tithes and the payment of rents; others with sheep fairs; others with festivities on hill tops.

In Orkney "Lammas brothers and sisters" were couples who attended Kirkwall Lammas Fair and for that period behaved as though they were married. Manx people used to hold a somewhat scandalous celebration on the top of Snaefell at Lammas-tide, until, it is said, a Methodist preacher put an effective stop to it by passing round a collection bag!

I have never stood on top of the Silbury Hill at the rising of the Lammas-tide full moon, and now I suppose increasing years make it unlikely that I ever shall. As with seeing the Midsummer sunrise at Stonehenge, you need a clear sky. But I am assured that, when conditions are right, you can still witness the Earth Mother giving birth to the moon, as she did to the satisfaction of those neolithic people who shifted all those tons of chalk and soil in her honour, nearly five thousand years ago.

Finders keepers

By Joe Joyce in Dublin

AN EARLY Christian silver chalice and other artefacts valued at up to £8 million should be returned by the Irish National Museum to the father and son who found them, the High Court in Dublin ruled last week.

The decision has caused consternation among archaeologists, who fear an invasion of ancient monastic sites by treasure hunters with metal detectors trying to emulate an English businessman, Mr Michael Webb, who with his son, Michael, found the hoard in a County Tipperary bog six years ago.

Dr Brendan O'Riordan, the director of the Irish National Museum, said: "We're very concerned about that aspect of the situation." He added that he would be advising the Irish government to appeal to the Supreme Court against the judgment.

Mr Webb and his son had sued the Irish authorities for the return of the artefacts, known as the Derrynaflan Hoard, after the place where they were found.

The collection consists of an 8th century silver chalice, patten and stand, and a bronze strainer and bowl. It has been described as one of the most important ever uncovered in Ireland.

The Webbs found them with the aid of a metal detector close to the ruin of a 5th century monastic settlement. They refused the offer of a £10,000 reward, but the two owners of the land on which they were found accepted £25,000 each.

Mr Webb, of Clonmel, County Tipperary, said that he was absolutely delighted with the court decision. He added: "It was not totally unexpected. Honesty finally pays off, I think."

The original discovery prompted fears among archaeologists of unauthorised excavations which have been exacerbated by the judgment after an eight-day hearing earlier last month. The use of metal dectors is not forbidden, but it is illegal to dig for buried objects without a licence to excavate.

During the hearing, evidence was given by a Sotheby's expert that the market value of the collection was between £5 million and £8 million. But Dr Michael Ryan, the Keeper of Irish Antiquities, valued it as between £2.5 million and £3 million.

Dr O'Riordan said the judgment had thrown into doubt the whole question of treasure trove, under which gold and silver objects which had obviously been hidden by their owners were taken to belong to the monarch or the state. But the court decided that this custom had not been enshrined in Irish law.

Mr Justice John Blaney decided, however, that the value of the objects had been enhanced by restoration work and that he would hear evidence in the autumn about the value of that work. Some of the restoration was done by the British Museum.



The 8th. century silver chalice.

A Titanic myth laid to rest

By Mark Tran in Washington

THE "unsinkable" Titanic went down with a whimper, according to explorers of the wreck.

The iceberg that struck the luxury liner on April 14, 1912, 400 miles southeast of Newfoundland did not tear a gash but "popped some rivets rather quietly but lethally" on the side of the ship. Water rushed in as the impact buckled the plating.

The myth of the deadly gash was laid to rest at a packed news conference at the National Geographic Auditorium in Washington presided over by Dr Robert Ballard, leader of the deep sea exploration of the Titanic wreck.

Dr Ballard showed extensive videotapes and still photographs taken during 11 dives to the ship. In a joint operation with French researchers he discovered the resting place of the Titanic last September, 12,000 feet down.

He returned last week from a 22-day trip to photograph in detail its hulk, split into two main sections, much of it rust-encased debris. Earlier, Dr Ballard tested an unmanned robot which provided video footage of the wreck. The pictures showed rivers of rust covering the hull of the ship.

Brass, ceramic and copper objects, such as portholes, saucepans and kettles fared better in the depths and still retain their polish, but all the elaborate woodwork is gone. What mostly remains is the caulking between the planks, or a spongy mass filled with bore holes. The Titanic's woodwork was eaten away by woodboring molluscs which have festooned the liner with skeletons in the million.

A three-man crew aboard the Alvin deep submergence vehicle spent 33 hours last month exploring the wreck, which is broken in two. The robot was attached to the front of Alvin to be manoeuvred into areas inaccessible to the bigger craft.

The crew found the bow of the ship much easier to explore than the "rat's nest" of cables and debris at the stern over 500 feet away. Both halves hit the bottom wit[h] such force that they are now du[g] into the ocean floor, and D[r] Ballard speculated that the shi[p] broke up on the surface or on i[ts] way down. However, after exte[n]sive probing of the wreck, the cre[w] found no sign of a gash that coul[d] have been caused by the iceberg.

The crew found no sign of t[he] Titanic's name plates. "Time h[as] eroded its name," Dr Ballard sai[d.] But the 1,552 people who perish[ed] — 705 survived — will be n[ot] commemorated by a plaque put [by] the expedition on the stern of t[he] wreck — where most people [as]sembled as the Titanic sank.

Dr Ballard believes that t[he] Titanic should be left in peace. [The] expedition left the wreck [un]touched, and left possible sou[ve]nirs on the seabed. With [un]scrupulous people in mind, he s[aid] that the most valuable artefact[s] the unmarked wreck had probe[ably] been destroyed or buried d[eep.] "The Titanic is protecting its[elf,]" he said.

The new man at the National Gallery

By Maev Kennedy

MR NEIL MACGREGOR was "delighted but surprised" to find himself being unveiled last week as the National Gallery's new director.

At the press conference, the editor of the fine arts journal, the Burlington Magazine, who has never worked a day in any sort of gallery, was left in peace for some time, hands folded and licking his lips nervously, while the chairman of his new board of trustees, Mr Jacob Rothschild, dealt with a barrage of questions about the man — or men — who did not get the job.

Turning the discussion away from a favoured contender, Mr Ted Pillsbury the director of Fort Worth's Kimbell Art Museum, Mr Rothschild said Mr MacGregor, who is 40, had quite exceptional qualities. And Sir Michael Levey, who remains in the job himself until next January, added that it was not unprecedented for an outsider to be appointed to such a job. The trustees' original choice was Mr Pillsbury but he backed out at the last moment.

Invited to speak for himself, Mr MacGregor declared his ability to stand up to the board of trustees — his position would be no different from his predecessor's, he said, and Sir Michael smiled reassuringly — and was then immediately asked how he felt about being the second best man for the job.

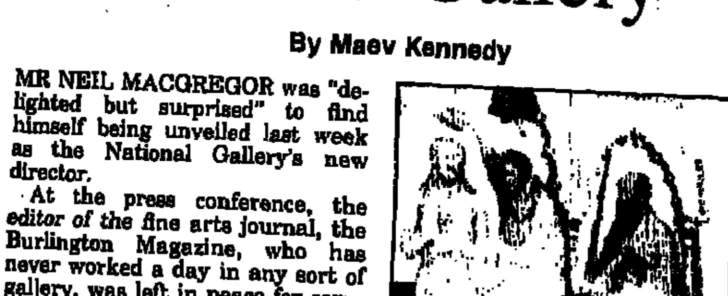
"He'll answer that in a minute," Mr Rothschild cut in.

When he was allowed to speak for himself, Mr MacGregor proved to have the soft answer to turn away wrath.

Mr Pillsbury, who withdrew from the running, was a good friend of his, he said, and they had often spoken together about the gallery. "Nobody interested in museums could mind being runner up to Dr Pillsbury."

What changes would he like to make? "The main thing I would like to change is to continue the changes that are under way," Mr MacGregor replied.

Many of the physical changes would be dictated by the new



Mr Neil MacGregor

building, he said reasonably, and much of the buying policy would depend on what came on the market. And he wanted to bring out the educational aspect of the gallery more.

Both Mr Rothschild and Sir Michael had already stressed that much of the job was about consultation and co-ordination, and Mr MacGregor agreed. And he thought it would be nice to have some more 19th-century pictures.

About just two things, without pausing for an instant to allow his mentors to answer for him, he was quite definite. The gallery was not going modern, he insisted, and 1910 seemed to him "as sensible a distinction as any other".

And he was quite clear on admission charges. He could see that "circumstances might arise that would cause one to reconsider" — many of the trustees, including Mr Rothschild, are believed to favour admission charges — but he believed the collection belonged to the natioin, and nothing should impede the nation's access.

"I am totally opposed to admission charges — as I have written on countless occasions in the Burlington Magazine." And the gallery's newest exhibit was swept away to be photographed and catalogued.

Forty years of bomb and bikini

By John May

A FEW short months after Hiroshima, MGM launched the career of the starlet Linda Christian as the Anatomic Bomb. Eighteen days after the first post-war atom bomb test at Bikini Atoll on June 30, 1946, Louis Reard registered the name for the smallest piece of swimwear this side of total nudity. The bomb itself had a picture of Rita Hayworth stencilled on it. The world had discovered a new metaphor for sexual arousal.

Much has been written about the nuclear bomb, about nuclear winter and civil defence, megatonnage and defensive postures, but, as Paul Boyer reminds us, there have been few assessments of the bomb's effects on culture and consciousness. "We have somehow managed to avert our attention from the pervasive impact of the bomb on this dimension of our collective experience."

Boyer, a professor of history at the University of Wisconsin, in his book By The Bomb's Early Light (Pantheon, New York) has surveyed this hidden impact and discovered that all the major elements of our contemporary engagement with the nuclear reality took shape, at least in America, within the first five years of the nuclear era.

Within hours of the annoucement the Washington Press Club was offering an "Atomic Cocktail." Within days a New York Fifth Avenue store was offering Atomic jewellery. By 1947 the Manhattan telephone directory listed 45 businesses that had incorporated the magic word, including the Atomic Undergarment Company. A cereal company was even offering genuine "Atomic Bomb" rings for 15 cents and a boxtop.

The bomb triggered the most bizarre period in country music history. Many of the songs featured on the soundtrack of Atomic Cafe come from this time. Songs like Atomic Power, written by Fred Kirby, a veteran radio cowboy singer from North Carolina, on the morning after Hiroshima; Jesus Hits Like An Atom Bomb by Lowell Blanchard with the Valley Trio; When They Drop the Atomic Bomb by Jackie Doll and his Pickled Peppers and Old Man Atom by The Sons of the Pioneers (1947), which features the immortal lines: "So listen folks, for here's my thesis/Peace in the world, or the world in pieces."

There was a feeling among writers of the period that, according to Dwight Macdonald, "modern horrors" had undermined not just a particular style but the entire literary enterprise.

Norman Mailer was to develop the modern horrors theme in his famous essay, The White Negro, first published in Dissent in 1957, which concerned the birth of "the American existentialist — the hipster, the man who knows that if our collective condition is to live with instant death by atomic war . . . then the only life-giving answer is to accept the terms of death, to live with death as immediate danger, to divorce oneself from society, to exist without roots, to set out on that unchartered journey into the rebellious imperatives of the self."

James Agee, then a 36-year-old aspiring novelist, screen-writer and movie critic for Time, heard news of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and wrote a rough sketch for a movie called Dedication Day.

It describes the dedication of a soaring "fused uranium" arch designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, built in commemoration of the atomic bomb. Beneath the Arch burns the Eternal Fuse, at a constant rate of one inch per second; it is constantly manufactured in a hidden workroom beneath by crippled war veterans and maimed victims of the Bomb.

The question that haunted writers of the period and continues to do so was that if an air raid on one small Spanish town could inspire one of Picasso's greatest canvasses (incidentally, still under armed guard), how was one to respond imaginatively to Hiroshima?

Linguistic critic Blossom Grayer Feinstein, writing in the New Yorker in 1965, phrased it this way: "Is it possible that in spite of our vast and ever-growing vocabulary we have finally created an object that transcends all possible description?"

In spite of the problems, the literature of the nuclear age kept growing. Nevil Shute's On The Beach (1957), Walter Miller's A Canticle for Leibowitz (1959), Eugene Burdick and Harvey Wheeler's Fail Safe (1962) and Kurt Vonnegut's Cat's Cradle (1963) all imagined scenarios of nuclear war and human extinction.

But it was a British poet, Jeff Nutall, who fingered the pulse most closely in his seminal Bomb Culture, written in 1967 and published as the first Paladin paperback in 1970.

He wrote: "With the post-Hiroshima teenagers, disaffiliation was always automatic rather than deliberate."

He believed that, at the point of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the generations became divided in a very crucial way. The people who had passed puberty at that time found that they were incapable of conceiving life without a future; the people who hadn't, were incapable of conceiving life with a future.

Two cultural responses were in evidence during this period. One view, a kind of mystical acceptance, was expressed by Joe Berke as follows: "Let the bombs fall, the biggest bombs, and so a great mandala will unfold, and in one micro moment, all that can be, will be; and all that need be stated, will be stated; and western man will have achieved full and everlasting expression of what no longer need be expressed."

In 1985, I tracked down Jeff Nutall to the Chelsea Arts Club. He told me: "What one wants from a bomb-conscious artist is an antithesis to the Bomb. One wants opposition to the Bomb. One wants gestures and statements and experiences that are going to be able to put before humanity, before the public, before society, a way of thinking which is not part of the internal, competitive, war-power system.

"Maybe the bloody Bomb isn't going to happen. Maybe it is, as I suggested in Bomb Culture, just a cultural catalyst which is driving us forward, almost at pistol point, into a consciousness which we have to achieve quickly."

The Bomb is the big bass drum of modern culture, the underlying culture, the underlying anxiety beneath and beyond all the ephemeral outpourings that characterise the posturing 1980s.

As the sociologist Edward Shils has remarked, atomic bombs made a bridge across which apocalyptic fantasies, marching from their refuge among fringe groups, invaded all of society. Whoops Apocalypse is less of a joke when Reagan is President and after Challenger and Chernobyl. As the Physicians Against Nuclear War conference recently put it, nuclear war is an accident waiting to happen.

We would do well to pay attention to the cultural signals. We are all hibakusha — explosion affected people. Bomb Culture is the one style that will never now go out of style.

The Bikini, presented by Pedro Silmon with an introduction by Meriel McCooey, published by Virgin, £9.99.

Bolshoi's Golden Age

By Mary Clarke

THE Bolshoi Ballet danced The Golden Age for the first time in London last week and had a triumph, despite the fact that the ballet is not looking quite the way it should. Sir John Tooley explained before the late curtain rise that London fire-proofing regulations had affected the scenery and, although the Bolshoi had agreed to dance, the production would not be up to the standards to which they aspire.

True, Simon Virsaladze's settings, wonderful evocations of the spirit of Soviet Russia in the early 1920s, were not seen to best advantage and the scene changes did not move with the immaculate ease I saw when the Bolshoi was at the Staatsoper in Vienna. The dancers were cramped for space, too, but nothing could diminish the impact of their performances or the marvellous theatrical drive of Yuri Grigorovich's choreography.

Set in a small town on the Crimean coast in 1923, the ballet is concerned with the triumph of good, in the persons of young fisher-folk, over evil, represented by the decadent frequenters of the nightclub called The Golden Age. The score by Shostakovich is delightful (how beautifully he orchestrates Vincent Youmans's Tea for Two into the nightclub scenes) and Grigorovich has, with the permission of the composer's widow, also incorporated passages from the piano concertos for the love duets, which are the most rapturously eloquent he has ever created.

As always, Grigorovich takes the classical vocabulary as his base, but colours it with elements from folk dance (for the fisher-folk) and from social dance. His nightclub scenes, aided by Virsaladze's brilliant costumes and the 1920s make-up and hairstyles, evoke and satirise the whole period.

The dancing, which has been the greatest joy of a joyful season, was at this first performance simply sensational. The enormous young corps de ballet pour over the stage in the exultant scenes, filling it with slinky social dancers and cabaret artists on the ballroom floor. As the hero in shining white, Irek Mukhamedov performs prodigies of virtuosity that defy description — at the height of a jump he seems to do the splits, perform a corkscrew turn and still descend immaculately — while radiating goodness and inspired leadership.

As his true love, Rita, Natalia Bessmertnova, always eloquent in choreography by Grigorovich, dances with mature beauty and authority. As the "nasties" Yashka and Lyuska, Alexei Lazarev and Tatiana Golikova perform with relish, as does Mikhail Tsivin as the master of ceremonies. But it's the Bolshoi Ballet itself which takes the final honours. Every tiny cameo role is neatly judged and the ensembles are breathtaking.

A midsummer night's gloom

By Waldemar Januszczak



Munch's Inger On The Beach.

THE conventional view of late 19th century Scandinavian art is that it was a period of minor interest which somehow spawned a major artist, Edvard Munch.

I imagine that among the main ambitions of the largish selection of turn of the century Scandinavian pictures at the Hayward entitled, rather leadenly, Dreams Of A Summer Night, must be counted the determination to challenge this simplistic view and to replace it with a more complex understanding. Munch is taken out of his isolation and given a context, and bedfellows.

Unfortunately this proves a vainglorious move; modern art history is, I think, vindicated. Munch, it turns out, was an isolated genius surrounded by fiords full of mediocrities.

Indeed the exhibition underlines how strongly-felt was Munch's sense of isolation, how necessary it was to his genius. In Munch's art the ordinary world always seems an arm's length away. He alone of the late 19th century Scandinavian painters developed an original vision of life — and of course of death — because he alone was truly alone. The rest had each other.

What a morbid gathering this is of frozen painters from the thawing North. If there is an innocent smile in the gallery I missed it. The favourite mood in landscapes and interiors is a vague feeling of foreboding. Not only is a new century coming but so, it seems, is the bogeyman.

And In His Eyes I Saw Death is the snappy title of a portrait by Denmark's Ejnar Nielsen. A youth with cropped hair and large oval cat's eyes stares out over the spectator's shoulder into the dark beyond of his destiny. Nielsen's other contributions to the show are entitled The Sick Girl and The Blind Girl.

All over the show Nordic despair comes bubbling out from the art like sulphurous waste from a Finnish geyser. Sweden's Bruno Liljefors watches the mating of some capercailyes. He might as well be watching the last act of Hamlet, the air is so heavy with doom, despair and desire.

The Scandinavian art we see here seems to have been viewed through the spooky light of interminable summer evenings. The artists seem permanently frightened by the forest.

Where English art of the same period celebrates the tameness of the English country landscape, these brooding Scandinavians celebrate nature's sublimity.

But how ponderously they do it. Here they are talking about the dislocation of reality, obsessively investigating their troubled fin de siècle psyches, and they do so in salon styles of numbing conformity and by employing the most banal symbolism.

A naked young boy crouches on his knees and stares into a skull. Painted by Finland's Magnus Enckell he is, of course, staring at his destiny. Theodor Kittelsen of Norway provides a melodramatic horror story called The Black Death. A crow arrives at a mountain village at night. But is the crow also the mysterious old woman with a rake whom we see coming across a skeleton by the roadside? And are both of them The Black Death?

When they do attempt an innovative marriage between style and content of the kind so gloriously achieved by Munch, the results are kitsch. Sweden's Ernst Josephson paints the Holy Sacrament in pulsating, pasty-white brushstrokes, bastardised Van Gogh. The result is pure marzipan. In Jens Ferdinand Willumsen's After the Tempest, a mother and child are shown rushing along the beach while the sun goes into lurid super-nova. The resulting colour-scheme would look at home on the cover of a science fiction paperback.

The main antidote to the lurid melodrama of the landscapes and subject pictures is the simple Scandinavian .. Eibakke's Lay The ... does capture those tau... moods which we know from ... plays of Ibsen (who appears towering like a mountain peak in a portrait by Erik Werenskiold) or the films of Bergman.

Yet even in the pursuit of silence these painters can be crass, no one more so than Vilhelm Hammershoi, a man they call the Danish Vermeer. Hammershoi never looks a woman in the face. He always views them from the back, their heads bent, peeling potatoes or embroidering a dress in silence. His silence is so staged and loud.

Munch transcends the limitations of the show as freely as Kittelsen's flapping crow. There are seven Munchs in the exhibition, all excellent. The most telling is Inger On The Beach, a portrait of his sister. Inger sits on some beach-side boulders, a hazy sea stretching away ethereally behind her. Like so many of the young women in the show she seems to be lost in thought, a French Lieutenant's Woman yearning for a life of her own.

But where others attempt to spice up her introspection with pictorial gimmickry (empty rooms, ticking clocks, open doors, bare interiors, endless greys,) Munch says it all with a simple outline which keeps the figure in and the rest of the world out. Where others give their lonely women a tragic grimace, Munch hints at her sadness but does not delineate it.

Where painter after painter strains to overload their pictures with the seductive melancholy of a summer evening, Munch does it all in his background with a few stakes shoved into the water and the shadow of a fishing boat. Long after the Black Death has passed and all the hobgoblins that frightened the turn of the century Scandinavian artist have slunk back into the forest, the glowing white of Inger's dress continues to haunt this exhibition like a ghost.

Dreams Of A Summer Night a the Hayward Gallery unti October 6.

All for love

CINEMA by Derek Malcolm

BASED on Jane Rule's novel, Desert Of The Heart, Donna Deitch's film Desert Hearts tells the story of two women's attraction and love for each other amid the unpromising territory of the gambling town of Reno, Nevada, in 1959. It was filmed cheaply on location, but looks better than one would have thought possible for the price. Chiefly, though, it is a performance film, trying hard and successfully to get right under the skins of its characters and the time.

Vivian (Helen Shaver) is a New York professor of Eng. Lit. seeking a Reno divorce. She has been married for 12 years and just wants "to be free of who I've been." She is disciplined and controlled, to the point of coldness. Then she meets Cay (Patricia Charbonneau), a wild world exuberant artist working in a casino, who is also gay. Against a background of an almost complete lack of understanding, the two fall in love.

Gay films come in all shapes and sizes, from the passably sublime to the patently ridiculous. But this one, though quite clear about itself, can be enjoyed by anyone. Perhaps this is because it makes neither the usual appeal for tolerance nor proselytises.

The performances of the two principals are orchestrated by Deitch with a quiet skill that enables her to take risks without any sense of prurience. The love scenes, for instance, are more direct than is usually the case — and consequently more erotic. They mean something because they are not just physical.

Shaver and Charbonneau are certainly the main link in the metaphor but the painting of the other characters is three-dimensional too, and painfully illustrates the price everyone has to pay for any kind of freedom, sexual or otherwise. Only occasionally does the very short shooting schedule reveal gaps, John Sayles's Lianna only had a brave stab at what Desert Hearts achieves.

Purple Haze was shown in the London Film Festival way back in 1982. Like Desert Hearts, an independent production, it's set in 1968 when young men with long hair were called up for the Vietnam war but did what they could to escape the draft.

Jimi Hendrix, Country Joe and the Fish, Cream, The Byrds, Buffalo Springfield and Jefferson Airplane feature on the sound-track of David Burton Morris's liberal scream against the orthodoxies of the time. Petar Nelson plays a marijuana-smoking student facing the wrath of his parents and girlfriend when summarily expelled from Princeton.

This is a movie that should have been made a decade or so ago for maximum effect. Even now it is worth seeing (and hearing) just to acquaint yourself with those dear, dead years when the young honestly thought they might affect history.

Harping on at the party

THEATRE by Michael Billington

I WELCOME John Dexter's New Theatre Company: it offers a refreshing antidote to the trivial pursuits of most West End theatres. But T. S. Eliot's The Cocktail Party, though directed with brio, makes a strange opening choice. Watching it revived now is like seeing the dust-sheets removed with a great flourish from some heirloom only to discover that it is chipped and mouldy with age.

The most common charge against the play is that drawing-room comedy is not a fit vehicle for the discussion of spiritual malaise: that the result, in Tynan's phrase, is "Pinero on stilts". That seems to me nonsense since, at least from Shaw's time onwards, dramatists have used popular forms to say serious things. What makes it a hard play to like is that Eliot's poetry does not so much heighten and intensify the dramatic situation as verbosely expand it. Even more off-putting to me is the arctic temperament behind the play that implies that marriage, childbirth, human relationships are a compromising second-best to the consolations of pain, martyrdom and sacrifice.

Eliot presents us with a crisis in the lives of three central characters: the unfaithful, mutually recriminatory married-couple Edward and Lavinia Chamberlayne and the former's mistress, Celia Coplestone. The godly psychiatrist, Sir Henry Harcourt-Reilly, pierces through the self-deception of Edward and Lavinia: he makes them see that his incapacity for love and her unloveability (echoes of Tom and Viv?) can be fitted together in a geometric pattern and that they can, like most of us insufficient mortals, make the best of a bad job.

But Eliot's spirit is kindled far more by Celia who is weighed down by solitude and a sense of sin, who is despatched by Harcourt-Reilly to join some austere missionary society, and who suffers a famous redemptive crucifixion near an ant-hill.

In 1949 the play was thought to be shrouded in mystery. It seems to me to be unambiguously saying that bourgeois social life is an empty illusion, that we all live and die alone, that we never understand our intimates but that the fortunate few are able to atone for their sins through pain. Compared to Eliot, Beckett seems a merry jester in cap-and-bells. But, setting aside Eliot's misanthropy, what makes it an indifferent play is that his verse is less dense with meaning than endlessly circumlocutory: the language is disproportionate to the ideas and feelings it contains and the play is stuffed with redefining phrases like Celia's "I am not sure, Edward, that I understand you; and yet I understand as I never did before."

Dexter's production partially overcomes this by highlighting Eliot's mordant comedy: the party persiflage at the beginning is wittily underscored by Stephen Boxer at the piano. But by castin Alec McCowen as Sir Henry Ha court-Reilly Dexter also ensur that Eliot's advocacy of Christi martyrdom is put across wi brilliant messianic fervour rath than ghostly ponderousness.

McCowen plays the first a where he is the uninvited guest, a note of quirky impishness; suppressed manic laugh sudde breaks out when he reassures t deserted Edward that he h ground for hope his wife may return. He is even madly misch vous, tipping his hat over his b like Teddy Knox playing Ph Marlowe as he exits by the ser staircase. But he is even m remarkable in the second curling up on his own psyc trist's couch in comic lang barking ferociously at his pati and giving to Eliot's descriptio bourgeois marriage a force lines don't inherently contain: is a good life," shouts McCo hitting the verb with a ham blow. He rejoices even mor Celia's atonement and, on her d it is Mr McCowen who lets forth of exultation. It is a perform that humanises an unpala philosophy.

Brian Vahey's design intrig ly suggests the Chamberl have hired the Vorticists to do interior decoration and De production does its damn (with Sheila Allen's Lavinia ly preggers) to play up Eliot' affirming qualities. Unfortu that flies in the face of enthralled by sin, guilt atonement.

Philosophers and pastrycooks

LITTLE GERMANY: Exile and Asylum in Victorian England, by Rosemary Ashton (Oxford, £17.50).

KARL MARX'S life in London, where he settled for good in 1848, is part of Europe's and Asia's historical lore. The family's squalid poverty in their first lodgings in Chelsea, Leicester Square and Soho, the deaths of several of their children at an early age, the grimly passionate pursuit of economic knowledge for the sake of political power which kept Marx at his desk in the Reading Room of the British Museum — all these have been described so often and in such detail that to the story of what Marx called "the sleepless night of exile," nothing new is now likely to be added; and the same is true of those countless acts of generosity, loyalty, and patience with which Friedrich Engels, in charge of his father's Manchester factory, again and again came to the family's rescue.

What Dr Ashton has written is a rich and occasionally somewhat breathless account of the lives of the many German refugees who came to England in the 1840s, mainly after the fiasco of the Frankfurt Parliament in 1848-49, and whose lives form a backcloth to early Marxism's heroic saga.

They came from all parts of Germany, but mainly from bureaucracy-ridden Prussia, and they came from all walks of life. Some were Republican, others belonged to the Democratic League of All Nations, some were pan-European Catholic, others left-Hegelian, cosmopolitan, or German nationalistic; the proletarians among them, especially in the Communist League, came closer to the social and political realities of English working class life than did the intellectual. But they were mainly middle-class "burgerlich" by background, with a few artisans, one or two aristocrats, as well as "the mad, the desperate and the swindlers" of the lumpenproletariat. ("As a foreigner with a fiddle moving from place to place," wrote one of them, "you just cannot scrape even a bare existence," his daily takings were less than one shilling and sixpence.)

The parts of London they settled in reflected their economic fortune: when Marx had to flee from his creditors, he went to Camberwell where there was a large colony of wealthy German businessmen. Engels in Manchester and Georg Weerth (nowadays read as the DDR's great white hope of socialist realism) in Bradford did much to alleviate poverty among those who

By J. P. Stern

ventured out north. Most of them made a living of sorts, some as clerks and teachers of music or languages, some as freelance journalists and doctors. Those who started businesses usually went bankrupt. The tailors, pastrycooks, the furriers among them fared a good deal worse than the intellectuals. Few of the women — the wives and governesses to whom Dr Ashton's best chapter is devoted — survived the ordeal without deep emotional upsets.

The benefits didn't all go one way. Contemptuous of the taste with which concerts were composed, the founders of the Halle Orchestra did a lot to improve English musical culture. At one end of the educational scale the exiles introduced the Frobel Kindergarten, at the other end they brought new subjects into the curriculum of University College, London, and into the monthly journals.

Why did they come to England? John Stuart Mill's On Liberty, published in 1859, provides some of the answers. England, to most of them, meant penury and deprivation, but it also meant the one country whose first political concern was with "the nature and limits of the power which can legitimately be exercised by society over the individual." They railed against the English class system, against the tyranny of custom and public opinion and mid-Victorian hypocrisy (which the Marxes fully shared), and they must have marvelled at Mill's explanation of the English: "They have some conception of liberty, and set some value on it, but the very ideal of equality is strange and offensive to them. They do not dislike to have too many people above them as long as they have some below them." Yet those bewildered foreigners also knew that (as one of Marx's more spirited opponents put it) they had found asylum in "the only country that has never expelled a refugee" — shades of Rudi Dutschke! — "and those juries have never let themselves be dictated to by a foreign despot."

Dr Ashton is right in not wishing to impose uniformity where circumstances and reactions remain varied. Some of the exiles — the "scientific Hegelians" — were utterly convinced that the world spirit was about to "realise" itself as "a democratic republic in Germany" while others, less sanguine, took out permanent subscriptions in Moody's lending library. A few did go back after the German victory of 1871; most of them were content to stay and be absorbed in the life of the country and give up hope of a class revolution: England, George Eliot wrote in 1854, is "as slow to set on fire as a stomach." It's the sort of prosy remark they came to expect from their hosts.

Unsurprisingly, the only anti-Semitic remarks recorded in this volume come from Karl Marx.

A saint who was on the make

By Peter Vansittart

THOMAS BECKET, By Frank Barlow (Weidenfeld, £14.95).

THE murder of Becket quickened the European imagination and provoked a spectacular thaumaturgical and commercial pilgrimage. Popular myth saw Becket as the saintly champion of the spiritual, against crude kingcraft, sometimes adding nonsense about an exotic Saracen mother. Post-Reformation writers invented the "a Becket."

There is no evidence that he deliberately sought martyrdom. Henry seems not to have cursed "this turbulent priest," though he did lament, "what miserable drones and traitors have I nourished and promoted in my household, who let their lord be presented with such shameful contempt by a low-born clerk?"

Becket's cult originated spontaneously from the poor and sick, to the initial disgust and subsequent corruption of the Canterbury establishment; his canonisation was largely due to the French court, with some political undertones, assisted by the posthumous discovery of worms and lice in his underclothes, proof of genuine austerity.

Sainthood can be a device for perpetually getting one's own terms, and sometimes seems relevant to Barlow's Becket. Neither he nor Henry II had great scholarship or sophistication, both were impressively brave and obstinate, and habitually over-reacted. Once, Henry hurled down his cap, tore off his clothes, and "as if squatting on a dung-hill," began chewing straw.

Becket seems more stylish than this, but more showy than creative. Also proud. Markedly egocentric, constantly on the make, he enjoyed sport, war, sartorial ostentation, and, as Chancellor, with cheerful relations with Henry, helped repair the ravages left by Stephen. As Archbishop, with characteristic excess, he fought not only for clerical independence but for his local property rights.

He was tactless, obdurate, sometimes petty. He may have had to overcome inner doubts and accusations of pronounced worldliness and royal favouritism. Certainly he became more papal than the wily, pragmatic Pope, more self-righteous than his bishops, more arrogant even than Henry. He drove himself to extremes of austerity, not for martyrdom, but to win, though finally preferring to die fighting than achieve an undignified escape.

Some supporters sighed with relief at his death. Like many substantial figures, he had poor judgment. "It is likely that Thomas, by dramatising situations, by foreseeing the worst and making provisions for it, helped to bring it about."

Professor Barlow is adept at disentangling tortuous and prolonged issues, and interpreting incomplete, prejudiced and ambiguous documents, in an age when ritual curse and kiss, interdict and excommunication, were as effective as trade sanctions and violence. He does not claim omniscience. One detail could be a suggestive precedent: Henry crowned his heir as junior king, a division of authority with some impact on Becket's fortunes.

Pope Alexander's constantly reiterated reply to envoys bearing Henry's complaints against Becket shows diplomatic skill: "We are glad that the King is so good. May God make him even better."

Is it safe . . . ?

By John Perkin

TRAVELLERS' HEALTH, devised and edited by Richard Dawood (Oxford, £6.95).

SUSPICIOUS overseas visitors, especially from the States, tend to raise smiles if they ask, "Is it safe to drink the water?", but for most parts of the world it's the first and most sensible question to ask. Outside Northern Europe, North America, and Australia "water from the public drinking supply is likely to be just a very dilute solution of sewage, and should be regarded as such unless known to be safe."

You might think you could kill all the bacteria by pouring into the water large quantities of whisky, but it can't be relied on. Ice is only as safe as the water it is made from. The best thing is boiling for at least five minutes. Rain water is likely to be purer than river, stream or pond water. Bottled or canned drinks are generally safe, but make sure they are opened in your presence and that the rims are clean and dry. Go easy on alcohol or you may dehydrate, especially in hot climates.

There are lots more practical tips and interesting information in this book. Snakes, for instance. Even a severered head can bite — don't handle them, even if they are said to be harmless or look dead. Contrary to Hollywood, if you are bitten you will not die within seconds or minutes; lethal doses of venom take hours, in some cases days, to work, generally plenty long enough to get treatment. Sucking the wound often does more harm than good, as does rubbing with snow in the case of frostbite — better to thaw out your feet on someone else's stomach, and that's a real test of friendship.

There are not many ailments, infections, diseases, or mishaps that go unmentioned in a book that would be very worthwhile reading for anyone going abroad, whether for a fortnight's holiday in Majorca or years away as an expatriate. There is good advice on where to go to get your jabs, what jabs to have, suntanning (generally of no benefit to health, purely cosmetic), what to do if your car knocks somebody down (drive on and ask questions later — "In some African countries, such as Angola, motorists who accidentally kill pedestrians may be stoned to death if they stop the car to tend the victim"), the special needs of children abroad, sea-sickness, jet lag, even the need to mention to security officials that you have a pacemaker (some detection machines could induce changes in the electrical components).

And, of course, how to get yourself back. "Deception, mendacity, or even bribery may be the last resort for marooned, moribund travellers determined to escape their otherwise inevitable fate by taking the next flight home." Only recommended in extreme cases.

Turbulent priest

By Peter Hebblethwaite

THE PRIEST WHO HAD TO DIE: The Tragedy of Father Jerzy Popieluszko, by Roger Boyes and John Moody (Gollancz, £10.95).

FOUR-HUNDRED thousand people turned out for the funeral of this Polish priest who had been hauled out of a reservoir looking (says the Time part of the duo, no doubt) like a porpoise, flopped on the shore.

Lech Walesa was at the funeral and addressed the tortured corpse: "Rest in peace, Solidarity is alive because you have given your life for it."

There was an argument about the funeral. The Polish Bishops, especially Cardinal Josef Glemp, the Primate, wished to have him quietly buried in his native village. His formidable mum, Marianna, had other ideas. She called upon the wet, large-eared Glemp and told him her son must be interred in Warsaw. She said: "A shepherd's place is among his sheep."

This is not the least astonishing episode in an admirable book, product of a collaboration between the Times and Time magazine. If it reads like the scenario for a film (David Puttnam art thou sleeping down below?), that is not because the authors needed to invent anything. They deal in a corrupt secret police, cover- and cock-ups in high places, hints of salaciousness, dramatic ironies, inner-Church conflicts, heroic courage, and the faith that shifts mountains. Poland is an existentialist's (late 1940s model) dream: everyone seems to be opting for life or death.

Apart from Popieluszko himself, the hero, still happily alive, is his bodyguard-driver, Waldemar Chrostowski. Though gagged and handcuffed, the ex-parachutist threw himself out of the moving Fiat WAB 6031 bearing the priest to his death, thus ensuring that the murderers could not go unidentified. Nor did Popieluszko give in easily. He escaped from the boot of the car, but ran the wrong way.

The trial permits the authors to reconstruct the last hours of the priest in some detail; and they point out that it is so far the sole example of a secret police murder being investigated and punished in a Communist country. But they also dwell on the irony that this was a show trial in which the victim became the accused. The judge absurdly presented both the murderer, Captain Grzegorz Piotrowski and Father Popieluszko as rival "extremists" who merely got what they deserved.

The most moving moment in this moving book is when the news of Popieluszko's death finally reaches his congregation in the church of St Stanislaw Kostka in Zoliborz, a northern suburb of Warsaw. The priest stumbled over the Lord's prayer. "As we forgive others," he said, "as we forgive others, . . . as we forgive others."

He didn't quite break down. But Popieluszko's defence lawyer, Edward Wende, explained after the verdict that his deceased client had been opposed to the death penalty, and moved that it be not applied in this case. So Piotrowski got a mere twenty-five years.

Bridge

By Rixi Markus©

QUEENS Tennis Club is celebrating its centenary this year, and among the special events was a two-day bridge contest, which was won quite comfortably by the Queens bridge team. On the second day, a team of journalists and experts was invited to join in, and I played for the first time with Victor Silverstone, an excellent international player from Scotland.

I enjoy forming a new partnership. It involves getting to know each other's style in certain situations and, not surprisingly, we improved our understanding considerably during the second half of the day.

Here is a hand which I particularly enjoyed. North dealt with North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
♠9
♥9 7 5 2
♦K J 8 3
♣A Q 9 6

WEST
♠Q J 10 3 2
♥10 6 4
♦A 7
♣J 10 2

EAST
♠A 8 6
♥A K Q J 8 3
♦5
♣8 4 3

SOUTH
♠K 7 5 4
♥—
♦Q 10 9 6 4 2
♣K 7 5

NORTH Mrs Marcus	EAST	SOUTH Silvstne	WEST
NB	1H	NB	1S
Dble(1)	3H	5D(2)	NB
NB	5H	Dble	NB
NB	NB		

(1) Having passed at my first turn, I was anxious to compete in the minor suits on the second round. An overcall of 1NT would have shown a hand containing fewer high card points but greater length in the minors.
(2) This was an excellent bid by Victor. As you will see, 5D would have been unbeatable on the North-South cards.

East dropped a trick in the play to concede 500 in 5H doubled, but it made very little difference to his result on the board. No other North-South pair had reached 5D, and a number of East-West pairs had been allowed to bid and make 4H. When he asked for my opinion, I suggested to East that he should have opened either 2H or 4H: 1H was likely to open the door to intervention by the opponents.

No. 1918

Black plays and helps White mate in two moves (by B. Lindgren). In helpmates, Black moves first, then both sides cooperate to achieve checkmate on White's second move.

This week's problem proved extraordinarily difficult for experts at the recent world solving championship, even though there is just a single line of play with two black moves and two white. Of Britain's Lloyds Bank-sponsored team which won the gold medals, Mestel took 18 minutes to solve it, Friedgood 28 minutes, while Lee was among the many who gave up. How do you compare?

Solution No. 1917

White K at KN8, R at K7, N at QB5, Ps at QN5, QB7 and QB4. Black K at

Chess

By Leonard Barden

Q3, R at QR2, Ps at QN3 and KB4. Mate in two.

1 K-R8 PxN 2 P=N, or if KxN, 2 R-K4, or if RxP 2 R-K6, or if R-R1 2 N-N7, of if P-B5 2 N-K4. Other king moves fail to RxP pinning the rook.

BRITISH international chess in recent years has become excessively concentrated in London and the South-East. Major events elsewhere, the Cleveland grandmaster tournaments and Manchester's Benedictine, ceased between the mid 1970s and 1983; but the South East during August 1986 alone will stage the world title match, the Kleinwort Grieveson British Championship, the Commonwealth Open and the Lloyds Bank Masters.

There seems little realistic prospect of changing this trend, and BCF officials have made the best of the situation by promoting less costly weekend events in the regions. Last month Nigel Short won the Joshua Telley quickplay at Leeds, while in September, Swansea will host the British Isles Open.

The swing to the South-East has shifted the balance of strength at county and club level. Southern teams have won the national club championship eight years out of nine, while the inter-county title has gone to Middlesex or Kent seven years out of eight.

These two heavyweight counties met in the final of the 1986 championship last month. The 32 players had an average grade of 210, and more than half of them also had international FIDE ratings. Battle proved close, with Middlesex scraping home 8½-7½; while the Black pieces scored a remarkable 9-4 winning margin over White.

On top board the reigning British champion displayed his tactical skills against our newest IM, aged 19.

Neil McDonald (Kent) — GM Jonathan Speelman (Middlesex)
Reti Opening
(Inter-county final 1986)

1 N-KB3 P-Q4 2 P-KN3 P-QB3
3 B-N2 B-N5 4 P-B4 P-K3
5 PxP KPxP

Black has chosen a solid defence to the Reti, barricading the long diagonal against White's KN2 bishop. Here 5 . . . BPxP? allows 6 Q-R4 ch. White should now continue 6 N-K5 when 6 . . . B-K3 7 P-Q4 B-Q3 8 B-B4 N-K2 9 N-Q3 would prevent Black's active piece formation of the game.

6 O-O N-Q2 7 P-Q3 B-Q3
8 N-B3 N-K2 9 Q-R4 P-KR4!
10 P-K4 PxP 11 PxP BxN
12 BxB P-R5 13 B-B4 BxB
14 PxB N-QB4

Black has the initiative, but here 14 . . . N-KN3! is more accurate.

15 Q-B4 Q-Q6 16 QxN QxB
17 Q-K3 Q-R4 18 P-B5

Here 18 QR-Q1 is best, to stop Black's castling.

18 . . . O-O-O 19 QR-Q1 P-B3

So that if 20 QxP? Q-N5 ch 21 K-R1 Q-B6 ch 22 K-N1 P-R6 23 Q-R8 ch K-B2 24 Q-R5 ch K-N1 25 RxR ch RxR 26 QxR ch N-B1 and mates.

20 P-B3 P-QN3 21 P-N4 P-N3
22 P-N5 P-B4 23 P-R4 PxP
24 PxP QR-N1 ch 25 K-B2 P-R6
26 Q-K6 ch K-N1

Despite his weakened K-side pawns, White has created useful counterplay. Now he goes wrong. If 27 QxN? Q-R5 ch and R-K1 wins, but 27 R-KN1! Q-R5 ch 28 K-K2 RxR 29 RxR Q-Q5 30 QxN QxR 31 Q-Q6 ch with a draw by perpetual check looks best for both sides.

27 R-Q7 R-N7 ch 28 K-K1 NxP
29 N-K4 Q-R3

Black's knight is still immune due to 30 QxN Q-B8 ch 31 R-Q1 Q-K6 mate.

30 P-B4 Q-R5 ch 31 R-B2?

Losing at once. The best chance was 31 N-N3 RxN! (not RxP? 32 R-B3! when White is on top) 32 PxR QxP ch 33 K-Q1 P-R7 34 QxN (if 34 Q-B6 Q-N6 ch) P=Q (stops White's R-N7 ch) when Black should eventually win with his extra pawn.

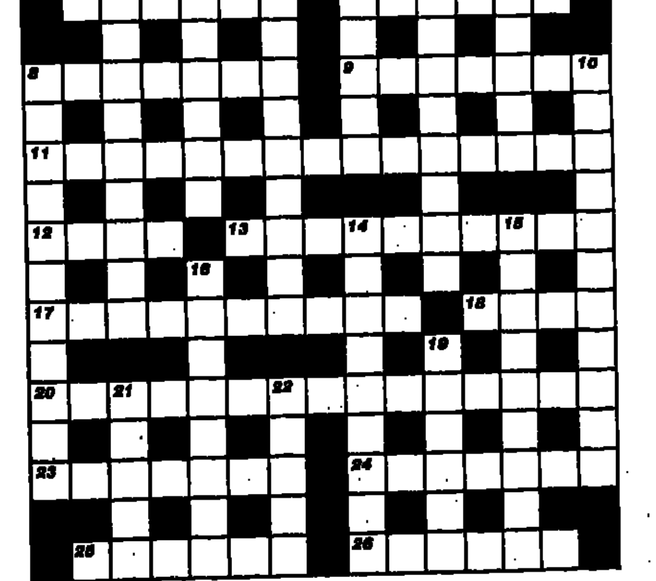
31 . . . RxR 32 NxR QxP
33 N-K4 N-Q5 34 Q-Q5 Q-K6 ch
35 Resigns

Notes to this game are based on comments by GM Speelman, who describes it as "messy". In playing for a win with Black against a strong opponent, you often have to accept a risky unbalanced position.

A COUNTRY DIARY

ISLE OF MULL: We drove about thirty miles along the narrow roads of the island, and to me it was the day of the raptors. Whether along the coast, through low fertile straths, through conifer plantations or the barren mountains dotted with red deer, we seemed to see birds of prey. Indeed I cannot ever remember seeing so many buzzards, not even in my teenage years in Wales; we counted no less than twenty-nine individual birds during the drive. They varied considerably in colour from really dark birds to those that were almost pale grey. The number we saw on telegraph poles made us wonder what perches they used before these artefacts criss-crossed the landscape. On the edge of Loch Nakeal a buzzard was feeding on a dead shag near the shoreline, whilst near Tobermory two were imitating kestrels by hovering in the uplift of air by a cliff face. Another buzzard, more typically, was feeding at the roadside on a dead rabbit while further on another buzzard sat on a single telephone wire looked, in silhouette, more like a harrier. The merlin we saw was hunting over open moorland, no doubt after meadow pipits, one of its favourite food species. In a contrasting hunting technique the four kestrels we saw were hovering, and the one at 1,500 feet near Calgary suddenly dropped to the ground, only to rise quickly with a small dark mammal in its talons. But the highlight of the day were two hen harriers, a male and female, that were hunting over high ground above Loch Sguabain. The female was quartering the moorland with the typical technique of low flickering flight. In contrast the male harrier was high up above the corrie, slowly circling and peering at the ground below, its white, grey and black plumage no doubt difficult to see from below. The male's technique was new to us, but neither bird had caught anything by the time the gathering dusk made the red deer start to move down to richer grazings on the croft land.

Ray Collier



By ARAUCARIA

ACROSS
1. Duck needs escort (6)
5. Insect sounds like invalid girl (6)
8. Crocus giving spice to start of spring with endless indignity (7)
9, 11. Most of 19, line 1: condition leading to 19 (2, 5, 2, 3, 4, 2, 4)
12. Count of topping and tailing almost (4)
13. Desire cards in place of cars? (10)
17. Dams bust during fire by old man at school (10)
18. One goes to nothing from sixth in the spectrum (4)
20. Defy M.O. when sick during sonata, Omar's favourite, always full? (4, 2, 2, 7)
23. Financial nucleus for home and 5 down? (4-3)
24. Irregular road to protect? (7)
25. Singular. little county, inky; that's intricate! (6)
26. Athlete needs mat for bean (6)

DOWN
2. Gala in Heraclitus's land is self-service (9)
3. Country bird (6)
4. Painter docked in non-U planet, full of spite (9)
5. Father of the man Wordsworth referred to (5)
6. Frame some pictures, perhaps, in social centre (4, 4)
7. Scott's ship's very short, as a matter of record (5)
8. Autumn herbs may be beastly (11)
10. Made (a fuss) about Charles's girl having battlements (11)
14. Welshman gets Scots valley for jointure (9)
15. In study fireplace I do some blacking (9)
16. A thousand times do wrong without shame (8)
19. Stage show being performed, deflect ball fatally (4, 2)
21. Gold 5 down for Welles (5)
22. Exam on extremes of geography is very close (5)

R	O	L	A	N	D			M	U	F	F	L	E	R
O		A		E		R		A		I		I		O
W	I	D	O	W	H	O	O	D		C	A	N	O	N
L		E		G		L		S		H		E		A
O	R	D	E	R		D	I	U	T	U	R	N	A	L
C				O		A		L				F		D
K	I	L	B	U	R	N		L	A	R	D	O	N	
		E		N						A		L		
	L	A	N	D	O	R		L	Y	C	I	D	A	S
A		F				A		O		O				H
R	E	M	I	S	S	I	O	N		N	A	P	O	O
N		O		P		N		D		T		H		T
O	V	U	L	E		G	A	R	D	E	N	I	N	G
L		L		L		O		A		U		A		U
D	I	D	D	L	E	D			D	R	A	L	O	N